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CHRIST'S WITNESS TO THE LIFE TO COME

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Sermons

CHRIST'S WITNESS TO THE LIFE TO COME

AND OTHER SERMONS

BY

H. C. G. MOULE, D.D.
BISHOP OF DURHAM

LONDON
SEELEY & CO. LIMITED
38 GREAT RUSSELL STREET
1908

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TO

MEMORIES

DEAR AND HOLY

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

PREFACE

THE Sermons and Addresses here included range in time over many years; the earliest was delivered in 1889, the latest in 1908. In their particular topics they are altogether miscellaneous, as a glance at the titles will show. Some deal with great articles of faith and duty with a general application. One was spoken before a devotional meeting of English Bishops. Another is a sermon to public school boys; two others have a special bearing on the great work of Missions, while another, the most recent of the series, was preached before a student-congregation in a modern university. In three others will be found elements, larger or smaller, of the biographical sort. The sermon entitled *John Newton* is primarily the study of a life; and into those headed respectively *Wise Men and Scribes*, and *Our Gathering together*

unto Him, the names and labours of notable good men, particularly of my two great predecessors in the see of Durham, are largely introduced.

Obviously no common theme, in any formal way, runs through such a collection. I have not hesitated, in view of this detachment of sermon from sermon, to leave unaltered certain echoes and repetitions. The same illustrations, and the same incidents, enter here and there into more than one sermon.

Yet I hope that a certain unity will be found running underneath this unassorted variety. The name and glory of our Lord and Redeemer, if it is not always the explicit theme, yet makes, I trust, the heart and soul of every discourse. This is so by no set design. But the Christian preacher surely finds more and ever more, as life and experience advance, that a spiritual law, strong and gracious, constrains him to carry up every theme to Christ, and to carry Christ out into the treatment of every theme.

In such a perpetual recurrence to Him, to

His Person, His Work, His Hope, there can never be any fear of monotony. His "riches," in the Apostle's great word, are "unsearchable," a labyrinth which no clue will ever track through its infinite recesses. Yet the "unsearchable riches" form evermore a unity, gathered up in the vital centre of Himself;

"Him first, Him last, Him midst, and without end."

May this book form, in some simple manner and humble measure, a contribution to that tribute of witness to His Name which is the never-ending debt, duty, and joy of His disciples.

HANDLEY DUNELM.

Auckland Castle,
March 9, 1908.

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I

THE WITNESS OF OUR LORD TO THE LIFE TO COME

Preached in Durham Cathedral.

"Neither can they die any more."—St. Luke xx. 36.

It is not my purpose to take this great word of the Son of God in order to study it in its context. Rather I read it before you as a brief but magnificent example of the profound and many-sided revelation of our immortality which our Lord, as the supreme Prophet, has in His teaching opened out before us. Yet the context must not be altogether passed by; it is pregnant of intimations not only of our immortality but of its ultimate reason. It was the Sadducees, you remember, who beset Him with a problem of the future, conceived and stated with an even unusual union of the coarse

and subtle; the problem of the seven-times wedded wife, and how the claims of matrimony would be adjusted for her and her husbands in the world of the resurrection. The Lord in His answer is as characteristic as the sceptics in their question. One hand, as it were, He lifts to the heavens, and speaks of the eternal and indissoluble life above with all the authority and absoluteness of "the Son of Man which is in Heaven": "They neither marry nor are given in marriage; they are equal to the angels; they cannot die any more." The other hand He lays firmly upon those Scriptures which for Him, in life, in agony, in death, and more than ever after resurrection, were the Oracle of His Father. And there, in the Scriptures, in one short unfathomable sentence, in the self-revealing words of Jehovah to Moses by the mysterious bush, He finds immortality not for the soul only but for the body too; that is to say, not for a part of humanity only but for its total. And He finds it in the fact that then and there the voice of eternal

personal Life and Love proclaimed a link between Itself and man, intimate and endeared: "I am the God of Abraham," said the Voice, "and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." That amazing *relation* was, for our Lord Christ, warrant enough for the certainty of the immortality, whole and perfect, of those three personalities. If God, if the God of the Bible, Living, Loving, Holy, Infinite, Alpha and also Omega of existence, can descend into living relationship with Man and be his God, then Man must be so made that he is capable of sustaining that relationship, capable in the idea of his nature. Then Man is not, because he cannot be, a creature only of the dust. He is born for immortality.

But I will not ask you to linger now over this great context of the text. The text shall lie before us to-day in its own dignity and power, and as an example of our Master's teaching at large upon our coming life. Some recollections of that teaching let us gather together, in its direct and also in its more inferential forms, and we shall note by the

way some practical issues of it for life, and love, and hope.

A very rapid review of the Lord's explicit teaching upon our survival after death and our eternal future will be adequate to the present aim. And I shall present it, without any apology, in the form of a quite simple appeal to the written Record. I am very far from forgetting the problems, raised in unexampled measure to-day, in the way of criticism, literary and speculative, over every page of the Gospels. Yet I hold that, to an extent sometimes quite forgotten by the student—absorbed, in his library, upon a point or upon a line—a vast number of those problems fall as it were apart when the mind, quickened to spiritual insights, can look afresh upon the majestic *ensemble* of the Gospel picture. Gaze a while steadfastly not upon the trees but upon the forest. Ponder a little the profound proofs (they lie, at their basis, detached from the innumerable questions of detail which are often thrust into disproportioned prominence by the literary

expert) of the unique, transcendent, eternal glory and significance of Christ. Resolve for a time to weigh the testimony to the Faith in its cumulative vastness and its boundless width of reach; and I do not think that it will seem then at all like an arbitrary or unthinking conclusion to be sure that the one Record of the origin of that Faith which, with any presumption of authenticity, lies before us is reasonably to be taken as providentially authentic. That fourfold Record is either a photograph of fact, or a concourse of elements incredibly fortuitous, or a creation of genius which throws into the shade all other creative literature that can be named. And the manner of the Gospels is as different as possible, even in the Fourth Gospel, from the manner of supreme creative genius. So I quote, as a child might quote it, the Book which for eighteen ages, and never more than now, has been evidencing its genuineness by its fruits, making the heart and the speech of the Lord Jesus the very voice of heaven upon the earth.

Remember then, in passing, some few of His explicit testimonies to the immortality of man: "Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul"; "He that loseth his life in this world shall keep it to the life eternal"; "Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life"; "Thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just"; "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where no moth corrupteth"; "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise"; "He that believeth in me shall never die; shall never see death"; "Because I live, ye shall live also"; "I am the resurrection and the life"; "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am."

The Sermon on the Mount is full of the intimation or assumption of immortality. The Parables, one after another, in symbols now of awe and now of glory, are full of immortality; the Virgins, ready or unready, at the door of the marriage supper; the wheat gathered to the garner and the tares to the burning; the talents, and the scrutiny of

the servants who have been trusted with them to trade withal; and the entrance into the Master's joy; and the rule over many things in the age to come.

But it is not to the Lord's articulated references to the deathless future that we have to appeal alone. Into the whole tissue and texture of His sacred message enters the thought of "that world and the resurrection of the dead." It is this which breathes through His awful estimates of the mystery, the horror, the condemnableness of sin. His whole view of sin, of man's moral discord with the holiness of God, is a view different by immeasurable degrees from what may for convenience be broadly called the modern conception of moral failure; and it assumes for man a quality and, so to speak, a quantity of existence transcending indefinitely, infinitely, the limits of this our little day. Let the attentive reader, not without a reverential desire for harmony with the supreme moral Mind, not without a bending of the knees before the invisible

Holiness, open afresh the pages where the verdicts of Christ upon sin, and righteousness and judgment are not so much recorded as left breathing. Let him think of the Master's judgment upon the idle word, upon the loveless taunt, upon the omitted act of kindness, upon the look of impure desire, upon the stumbling-block put in the path of the little child, upon the cowardly shame that shuts the lips which should confess His name; let him read these verdicts afresh, and with ears opened in the silence; and he will need no long-drawn reasonings to make him sure that the being whose moral state and attitude is dealt with thus by the Son of God is no *ephemeron*, no creature which will vanish out of being with the setting of the sun. He is born for immortality.

The same of course is the witness of the numberless suggestions in the words of Christ of the sacred significance of the human soul to the heavenly Father. That Father cares for the sparrow falling to the dust; and

wonderful is the assurance and all-consoling amidst "the groans of nature." But "ye are of more value"; "the hairs of your head are all numbered"; your being is important to your God. But why after all should we pause over even such utterances in detail when the same profound assurance is given us by the whole glory of the Person of our Lord, and by the whole wonder of His work? "*For us men* and for our salvation He came down from heaven." God the Son of God, Light from the Everlasting Light, He moved *for us* from the Throne. "When He took on Him to deliver Man, when He took Man on Him to deliver," when for us He became for ever one with us, when "He did not abhor the Virgin's womb," when "His soul was made an Offering for sin," when He cried *Sabachthani*, "Thou hast forsaken me," and then τετέλεσται, "It is finished"—He was all the while revealing to man man's own mysterious and infinitely sacred import to his God. Fallen, lost, rebellious, as he was, man still was the being

made in the image of his Maker. He must still, after his awful fall, be recovered, and more than recovered, aye, even at the cost of the sorrows of the Lamb of God. "What is man, that Thou thus wast mindful of him?" As *against* Thee, as *without* Thee, "man is a thing of nought." As *of* Thee, man is the pearl of price; the reflection of Thy own personal Infinity; the child and heir of immortality. He was formed in Thy creative counsels, O Thou Lover of Man, to transcend death for ever, and to persist, not in a part of his being only but in its indissoluble ideal whole, into the life of the world to come.

Looked upon from this high point of sight, the Redeemer's own victory over death appears at once as the most necessary and, in a deep sense, the most natural of His works. Setting it apart for the moment from its unspeakable significance for the forgiveness of our sins, we see it in a light most magnificent as the representative glorification of our immortal nature. The Son

of Man challenges the law of death by actually lying down under its iron grasp; but it is "not possible that He should be holden of it." He overcomes it. This is a victory whose character as fact is the most historical thing in history; to its actuality there come out as principal witnesses, but only principal, leading a "great cloud" of testimony, the glory of the Lord's Person, and the existence of the Lord's universal Church. He who died lived, to die no more. Transfigured, yet the same; embodied as truly as ever, in a body none the less real because now the perfect vehicle of His Spirit, He walked and talked with His own again. And as the proper, the inevitable sequel (for such it will be seen to be on reflection) of His Resurrection, He passed in Ascension into the light eternal. He went up thither, embodied still, leaving the promise (on His own divine and human honour) to return again, and meantime lifting the hearts of His mortal brethren towards the heavens where He was gone. He would not indeed detach them for

one moment from the duties at their feet; but He would invest with an ineffable air of heavenly dignity and heavenly hope the humblest factors, the most corporeal conditions, of their lot to-day. "As is the earthy one, such are they also that are earthy; as is the heavenly One, such shall the heavenly ones also be."

My brethren, this, in some faint and faltering outline, is the Christian revelation, the revelation by and in the Lord Jesus Christ, of the immortality of man. By word and by deed, by promise and by warning, by appeals to our mysterious personality, and to our awful conscience, by His own astonishing action in taking to Him our whole nature, and in it traversing and transcending death, He bids us men now know, without a doubt, that we are made not for time only but eternity. And He does this, such is the majestic balance and sanity of all He says and does, so as only to accentuate the importance of time. He dislocates no pure human relation. His doctrine, rightly under-

stood, is the keystone of the bliss of the family and its precious charities. It is the law at once of liberty and duty in the social and in the civic and in the national domains of life. The very leaves of His immortal tree are for the healing of the nations, as they bring to Him their wounds. It is He who has been and is the emancipator of the slave. It is He who is the one real Giver to woman of her dignity, her prerogative, her glory; the weaker vessel, in His estimate, only because the more delicately perfect, the more sensitive to the lights and voices of the unseen life, and therefore, how often, the stronger, the far more heroic, of the two types of the one humanity, in holy purity, and in the courage of self-forgetting love. It is He who has sown in man's troubled society the seed of an endless progress in a path of peace, by revealing the greatness of man as he is related to God, and then by laying it on every man, in His Maker's and Redeemer's name, to study always first the rights of others and the duties of himself.

It is He who by His articulation and embodiment of truth eternal and supernatural has given to the natural its full significance; so that His followers, because they have seen Him that is invisible, because they have handled by faith the things not seen as yet, see in every concrete instance of humanity around them a thought of God. They look upon men, women, children, with eyes perfectly human in their perception of common needs, and sins, and tears, and joys; but they see those things all the while with the sky of immortality above them, and so with a patience, a tolerance, a reverence, a love, a call to serve, which only Jesus Christ can teach. Yes, it is He, it is only He, blessed be His name, who gives to our mysterious existence its true continuity, its unity never to be dissolved, when we see it as re-created in Himself. It is only He who so unveils Eternity as to illuminate to-day. It is He, and He alone, who so brings man to know his own wonderful significance to God that he turns to his hardest or his humblest present task in the

spirit of a child of heaven, and carries the cup of cold water as if ministering in the eternal Presence-chamber. It is He, and only He, who expands the narrowness of the present into a boundless liberty by His doctrine of an eternal life, begun here and now, perfected in a perfection which will expand itself for ever in the vivid bliss of heaven.

In such a presence, and in such a prospect, let us think, let us labour, let us pray, let us live and die. And—do we ever pause or doubt in view of that amazing future when we, in Christ, shall "not be able to die any more"? Do we feel a misgiving of the soul, as though that long to-morrow would be too much for us, and we should at last even desire to sink out of ourselves into the dreamless sleep of a personless universe? Such thoughts have crossed the minds even of saints and sages, in moments when they have been awfully conscious of the weight of life. But the question is raised almost altogether by imagination, and imagination working where it ought to rest—in regions unknown

to us, but guaranteed to faith by God. And the answer to it lies, assuredly, in that great Scripture with which we began: "Neither can they die any more"; "I am the God of Abraham." To know HIM is the life eternal. To get a glimpse of HIM is to see what makes immortality the inmost necessity, the sublime *sine quâ non*, of the loving and transfigured soul. It has seen HIM; and its own being will be dear to itself for ever, as the seer of that sight. To anticipate His presence is the answer to every fear beside the timeless ocean of the coming life. For then as now the basis of our immortal personality will lie deep in our relation to the eternal Love. Not for one instant of the heavenly life shall we be asked to float in a void; we shall be borne upon the strong calm tide of the life of God; we shall repose in all the depth and wonder of our being upon the everlasting Arms. "Because I live, ye shall live also." "God shall be All, *and in all*"; not "All" in the sense of being the shadowy and silent Sum of the shadows and silence

of a Nirvana, but "All *in all*" the innumerable blessed ones who will be *themselves* for ever, but themselves supremely in this, that "*they* see His face, and His name is on *their* foreheads";

> "Where all the millions of His saints
> Shall in one song unite,
> And each the bliss of all shall view
> With infinite delight."

II

THE OX AND THE GOAD

Preached in the University Church, Cambridge, on Ascension Day.

"I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying, It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."—ACTS xxvi. 14.

IT is not in order to study the Conversion of St. Paul that I read this short extract from one of his own public accounts of it. The Conversion was indeed an event of transcendent moment not only for a mighty personality, nor only for the countless hearts which have been helped through it to believe for themselves in a Divine Redeemer from the death of sin into the life of righteousness. It has stood ever since its occurrence among the primary testimonies in the field of historical reason to the fact-character of the one Faith among men which asserts its

Founder to be also its Foundation, and to be the undying life of each and all of His followers.

One hundred and sixty years ago, when a narrow but penetrating scepticism had widely and deeply affected educated English circles, an honest and anxious sceptic, George Lyttelton, afterwards first baron of the name, discovered in the great Conversion, studied afresh with patient and open thought, good reason for intellectual reassurance and a return to reverent faith. "He found," says Samuel Johnson, in the last of his *Lives of the Poets*, "that religion was true, and what he had learned he endeavoured to teach, by 'Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul,' a treatise to which infidelity has never been able to fabricate a specious answer." Those last words may or may not be true to fact. Few arguments are so massive or so subtle as to preclude the production of a specious answer. But it is surely true that Lyttelton's book (enriched not many years ago with a prefatory essay by that suggestive thinker,

Henry Rogers) is still extremely well worth reading; it can still remind us, in a way of its own, of the vastness and depth of the historical as well as spiritual significance of the Conversion.

However, this is the Day of the Ascension. And you would wonder if I presumed, on this day dedicated to the exaltation of the Master, to invite our primary attention even to the greatest crisis in the life of the greatest of His servants.

It is indeed altogether to the Ascension, or, rather, to the Ascended Christ, that I ask you to turn with me to-day. And it is to Him under an aspect which on one side is singularly simple, while on the other—like everything which concerns Jesus Christ—it goes off into the bright unfathomable abyss of His Character and Being.

The Ascension as historical event I ask leave to take for granted, as to any long discussion. I am not blind enough to forget how, within the past few generations particularly, it has been enveloped with such

clouds of denial or doubt as to leave the weary mind, and still more the weary heart, almost unable at times to recollect that rock refuses to be melted into its envelope of cloud. But for myself it seems enough for a reasonable faith, first, firmly to remember that no single wonder of the Lord's life and acts is ever rightly viewed apart from the total, and apart from Himself—so that it is the sure road to fallacy to consider the witness for the Ascension as if it were for the Ascension of some one in the abstract and not of the Jesus Christ of the Gospel and of Christendom. Then further, I reflect upon the evidence from within to the character and quality of the Record; its majestic simplicity, the severe absence of that abundant *gigantesque* which marks, for example, every attempt by an apocryphal "evangelist" to depict the Resurrection. I note the quiet details in which St. Luke, true to himself, describes the closing interviews, and the final parting, and the man-like, friend-like greeting and sober encouragement given by

the two—just the two—angels to the Apostles. These are points about which we may be sure (unless we have gone far with that exaggerated literary scepticism which marks the present time, wherever the supernatural comes in) that St. Luke took pains to verify them, as he could so easily do, from men who were eye-witnesses of it all.

Then again, I turn over the Epistles. I do so with an unshaken personal persuasion, indeed, that they were all written within apostolic life-times, but with a good confidence in any case that their allusions to main current Christian beliefs of the first days are historical evidence of the highest order. And I find tokens in them everywhere, given incidentally, unanxiously, now in the way of reverent reminiscence, now as the firm basis of a transcendent spiritual truth or hope, that the Ascension was present "in all the thoughts" of the first disciples. Significantly enough, as we have remembered, the mere poetic and imaginative aspect of it is altogether in abeyance in these allusions;

description there is almost none; and this is a profound indication that the belief was not the issue of mental working from below but the resultant of phenomena so manifestly divine as precisely to awe and to sober the very souls which they meantime uplifted to the heavens. But everywhere the fact is present. In the Epistles it is as little a matter for doubt that the Master is ascended into heaven as that He rose again from the grave. True, there is no attempted philosophy, any more than an attempted poetry, of the Ascension. But with absolute decision the Apostles, and the Churches, repose upon the event. They know that "He is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God"; that "the heavens must receive Him"; that "from heaven we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ"; that He is meantime "making intercession for us" in the supreme Presence; that the ascending spirits of His saints, at death, are received there by Him, and "get home" there "to Him"; that He is not on earth, but there, "angels

and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him."

I take all this, and place it all in living context with that unique, that supreme phenomenon, the Biblical portraiture of the Son of God; and Reason (even as a Virgil might bid a Dante pass upward where he must not follow) bids Faith rightfully ascend, and continually dwell with Him who, "when He by Himself had purged our sins," did then and therefore "take seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

But now, what has our text to do with the glory of the Ascension? "*I heard a voice saying unto me, It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*"

The connexion which I find is direct enough as to fact. These are the words of the ascended Jesus, reported to us on the good faith of the man who heard them in that great moment of his life which at once diametrically reversed its course and, on the other hand, lifted it to a dignity of spiritual and moral greatness which may amply assure

us that no mere "storm of nerves" was the secret of that change. To Saul, thrown down upon the road, blind but intently listening, came this articulate utterance from above him: "Why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

So far as we know, those words were the first with which the silence of the Unseen was broken on earth, since the Lord, rising from amidst the Eleven, on the hill-top above Bethany, had given them His blessing as He went. He had been seen once in His exaltation by Stephen, and Stephen had appealed to Him to receive his spirit. But there appears no record of an audible reply.

Now, revealed again, Jesus is pleased to speak. He is there, objectively there, there in bodily reality; such, we know, was St. Paul's absolute and permanent conviction; and the air vibrated there with the spoken words, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

Is there not a wonder in that sentence so spoken, and is there not a message in

the wonder? We listen; it is a voice from the excellent glory. It is the speech of the Son of God, incarnate, glorified, supreme. What will be the style of His eloquence? What words almost unspeakable will sound from that height, conveying rather a sublime bewilderment to mortal ears than anything level to their perception? Well, this was the sentence as it came: "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

Here is indeed a paradox, when we come to look at it; a discord, almost *grotesque* at the first thought, if the words may be tolerated by reverence — but unspeakably thrilling as we think again. The King of Glory, from His place of light, putting out His autocratic power to change the course of history, through that sovereign revolution wrought in a human will of the first order, has occasion to speak; and speaking, He uses just a proverb, a homely proverb of the farm. Present to His mind is the ox that drags along the Galilean peasant's plough; the beast is sullen in his ponderous strength;

he lashes back against the steel-shod goad; and he suffers for it, and he gives in at last.

Many a time, as child, as boy, as man, JESUS had seen the thing happen, up and down the country-side, just as He saw happen a thousand other simple things of the house, and of the homestead, and of the field, and not only saw them but felt them and lived in them, till they became the very shapes and colours of His thought. How full of proverb His discourse had always been! The tree and its fruit, the needle and the camel, the physician sent home to cure himself, the labourer and his hire, the mote in the eye, the seed of the mustard, the fox and his earth, and last of all, and most moving, in that final march along the Street of Sorrows, the green tree and the dry:—such were the things assimilated out of the life of nature and of man into that human Mind, to issue out from it again in forms of speech which made the voice of God Incarnate to be the voice of all others vernacular and intelligible to the simplest soul, which yet received through

them, as it listened, the secrets of eternal life and love.

And now we are watching and listening, upon the road to Damascus. This same Lord Jesus speaks, and in this also He is the same. No throne of grace, or of glory, can modify His accustomed and most majestic simplicity. From the midst of the things unseen and eternal He stoops down to talk about the ox, and the goad, and the useless rebellion of the poor beast—all in the act of new-creating a Saul into a Paul.

And what are the messages to us of this divinely *rustic* voice from heaven? Has it not something all of its own to tell us about that upper life, and its inhabitants, and above all about its ascended Prince? To me it seems that heart and mind may both feel a strong uplifting power, as they seek there to ascend and there to dwell, in this proverb out of the glory above.

It says to us that the Unseen, "where Christ sitteth," the Paradise, the Third Heaven, may be indeed the place, on due

occasion, for " words unspeakable: which it is not lawful for mere man to utter "—but not for them only. It is hospitable also to utterances about the humblest works and most laborious days of our mortality. It is no mere sphere of transcendental abstractions, nor even only the palace of Powers and Virtues aloof from time. Heaven keeps a warm and genial continuity of thought with earth, and we need not wonder that its messengers, when their ministry gives occasion, know how to talk familiarly to man of manger and swaddling-clothes, of streaming tears and gazing eyes, of Judæa and Galilee, of girdle and sandals, of Paul, of Cæsar, and shipwreck and escape.

But above all this voice from the glory above, as it comes from the lips of our Redeemer, takes us straight back again to His own human heart and faithful sympathy. He is indeed, in the words of the man whom He converted in that great hour, words written, surprising thought, while scores, while hundreds of people yet lived who could remember His face and His

bearing at Nazareth or in Jerusalem—He is "exalted far above all heavens, that He may fill all things." Through Him, and also for Him as their sublime goal and Head, "all things were made," and among them "the mighty kingdoms angelical" of all the continents of heaven. But none the less, now as truly as ever, He is the Mother's Son of a human home, the loving Neighbour of a terrestrial country-side. He is Redeemer, Mediator, King of Glory, God the Son of God. But He is also the Friend, the Companion, the Brother, of our simplest, saddest, happiest, tenderest hour below. No fancied gulph of space isolates Him from us as we are; no limits of our body of humiliation confine us below His vivid sympathies. He who does not forget the Galilean farm takes to His heart the least romantic joys and sorrows of an English life. "Lord Jesus," writes Joseph Hall, in the last of his quaintly noble *Contemplations*, "it is not heaven that can keep Thee from me; it is not earth that can keep me from Thee."

III

THE MORAL POWER OF THE HEAVENLY HOPE

Preached on Easter Sunday.

"He said unto me, Fear not; I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold I am alive for evermore."—REV. i. 17, 18.

IT is the anniversary of the Resurrection. To-day all our acts of worship, and all the messages to us of God's Word, are full of the light and power of that most wonderful fact, that most transcendent and heart-uplifting truth, the rising again of the Crucified and buried Lord in the power of an endless life. As *fact*, that resurrection stands before us, the most solid rock in all the mountain-chain of history; the Christian Bible affirms it with grand fulness and repetition, and around that affirmation are massed the evidences of history and the manifold witness of the soul. To the Gospel story of that first day of the week testimony is borne by the existence of the

Christian Church, by the observance of the Christian Sunday, by the celebration of the Christian Eucharist, which never could have been instituted, and certainly never would have been continued down the ages, if the Crucified had lain silent in the grave and failed to fulfil His own promise to come back triumphant into life. And then, the witness of the soul cries out its long and deep Amen to the record of the first Easter. That "Jesus lives" is attested through these long nineteen centuries even till to-day by the glorious evidence of the innumerable lives transformed by this same risen and living Lord. We know that He lives, the conqueror of death completely and for ever, because we find that He lives in the hearts and wills that take Him at His word:

> "They who wholly trust Him
> Find Him wholly true."

In our thoughts from the holy Book concerning Easter this morning, I propose to take a single and very simple line. My desire is

to put before you just one recollection, viewed from more than one side but in itself always one. I take that magnificent fact, the fact of Jesus and the Resurrection, and hold it up before you as divinely given to us to light up life, to transform life, to make an incalculable difference in life, for the human heart which lets it in, and welcomes its radiant glory to light up the scene.

"Jesus is risen again; Jesus, once crucified, dies no more for ever; Jesus, God the Son of God, Man the Son of Man, is at this moment in being, is at this moment the central truth of the universe and the supreme certainty for my soul. Such is the fact. What shall be, its peace and its power for me?"

For a moment, to intensify our sense of the glory of the truth, imagine the opposite. Suppose the Resurrection never to have occurred. The Man of Nazareth said that He would rise again; but He failed to do so; the tomb of Joseph lay silent and unopened; the body, lacerated and cold, sunk

slowly into decay, and into dust at length. The last hopes of the disciples died slowly out. They loved His memory, but they ceased to connect it with anything but a pathetic ruin. Death had dominion over Him, after all. And so death had dominion over everything in them and for them. Death laid hands on their faith, their hope, their sight of God, their peace and their patience in His name. With the defeat of Jesus fell the whole building of their creed, and of their inner life. They had no secret of holiness and victory for themselves; there was no immortal hand to dry their tears; no ray of glory to shine through their own death and grave; and therefore they had no message for the world. They were "of all men most miserable." For they sank down amidst a hopeless ruin of spiritual beliefs, beside the tomb of a Christ who could not rise again.

A few years ago, in a work of fiction, not without its serious blots but marked by much vigour of presentation, the attempt was made to set this out in a realistic fashion. And

the reader was certainly led to feel that the universally accepted hypothesis of an unrisen Christ would prove to be a formidable thing in the open field of common life. A cold wind as of universal death seemed to pierce English society when what seemed to be clear proof was produced that Jesus had never risen. Voices faltered in the attempt to speak with even a trembling hope about grief, and sin, and death. Only the forces of sin were quickened. Despair frowned upon the enterprises of love and faith. Men who had hoped for holiness and heaven before were "of all men most miserable" now.

"But now is Christ risen from the dead." As we have remembered, the horrible supposition that He sunk indeed, to return and to overcome no more, is gloriously negatived by the overwhelming witness alike of history and of the Spirit's power. By every law of historical evidence it is certain that Jesus rose. By the profound experience of the Church and of the soul it is certain that the Risen One lives and loves.

Then apply that central and majestic certainty to the whole reality of life. Recollect, as you look within, and as you look around, that, whatever else is true or false, *this* is true, that Jesus rose again, that Jesus is alive to-day.

Perhaps the mystery and problems of existence beset you. Your brain is sorely perplexed by the riddles of the world and life; by the presence of evil of every sort in the universe which yet you affirm God made; by the boundless aggregate of suffering and of sorrow; by the wreck of human hopes; by the ruin of lives and of homes; by the groans even of lower nature, as the sparrows fall, and the innocent beasts are slaughtered or tortured for man's pleasure, aye, and as creature preys upon creature in the universal struggle for existence and survival.

Well, remember, amidst it all and against it all, that the Jesus Christ of Resurrection lives, at this hour, as the central fact of the complex universe. In Him meet God and Man. In Him meet creation and the

Church, for He is Head of both. You know Him; you do not know the riddle of existence, but you know Him in the power of His endless and imperial life; and He knows the riddle. Never, said the wise man, let what you know be shaken by what you do not know. You do know the risen and therefore supreme and triumphant Christ. Then be at rest, in a tender, noble sense of rest, even while creation groans and travails. For He overcame, and He reigns, and He knows. "He is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain."

Again, you are sorely pained under the inward and awful pain of the sense of sin. The guilt of sin haunts you like a spectre; you dare not say without misgiving to yourself, "I have peace with God"; "my sins, which are many, are forgiven." And the power of sin clogs your imagination and your will; you seem as if you could not get free of the serpent's coiling embrace and walk at liberty. Time and eternity are beclouded to you by the troubled conscience and the

enslaved and ever-yielding will. But now, remember the one fact of the Risen Christ. Let in upon your soul's heaviest problems the light of the Resurrection and its victory. Recollect the existence of this amazing Being, who is no construction of man's wish or fancy, but the eternal Truth itself, alive, at the centre of the moral universe, upon the very throne of God. Place beside your sense of guilt and judgment the atoning merits of such a Risen Saviour, so supremely great and victorious in Himself, so vitally related in His glorious Person to both God and you, and dare to trust your whole cause to Him in penitent repose. Call in to your soul's aid against the Tempter the glory of this sublime Conqueror, through whom indeed God can give to us, to you, the victory. The grace of this triumphant Lord Jesus Christ—it must be, it is, sufficient to be your emancipation and your life.

Or are you stricken by the griefs of life? Has sorrow fallen, directly or indirectly, heavy upon your heart, sorrow for yourself,

sorrow for those dearer to you than your own life is dear? Has the shadow of that death which sooner or later must touch everything earthly with its frost begun to fall over your evening, or perhaps your noontide, scene? Do you know what is meant by that word, "*O death in life, the days that are no more*"? Does it seem as if the true conqueror after all were the Reaper with the sickle, who "cuts the bearded grain at a breath, and the flowers that grow between"?

Answer these sad thoughts also with the Risen Jesus. Contradict them with the fact that the central power of all things is not death but life, life personal and infinitely loving, life whose name is "Christ which is our life." "O death, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth *us* the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Christ is alive to-day." So wrote R. W. Dale, of Birmingham, and straightway started (so he tells us) at the sight of his own words as their vast significance flashed suddenly back upon his heart. Yes, "Christ is alive to-day,"

and alive at the heart and on the throne of all created being. And from that heart and from that throne He speaks to the human heart that needs Him, turns to Him, and trusts Him, saying to it, "Fear not; I was dead, and am alive for evermore."

IV

EMMAUS

Preached in the English Church at Menaggio on the First Sunday after Easter, April 30, 1905.

"Two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus." —St. Luke xxiv. 13.

The walk to Emmaus is one of those narratives of the Scripture in which the utmost beauty of presentation and the utmost mental and spiritual significance lie side by side upon the page. Or let us rather say that it is a story, a history, where the beauty and the significance are not merely placed close to one another but are intertwined with a profound and vital relation and connection; as in a few moments we may remind ourselves.

Who that loves and ponders the holy Book at all has not lingered over the charm of this wonderful idyll of St. Luke? We have seemed to see with our eyes the two

friends stealing from the city-gate under the sun of the early afternoon, and setting out on their eight-mile walk, deep in a conversation—which itself is evidence of anxiety and agitation, for Orientals seldom converse upon the road. We follow them upon their path. It is not, as sometimes in pictorial art we see it represented, a lonely track over fields quiet with the Sabbath; for the Sabbath was yesterday, and to-day the Passover multitudes are all abroad over the environs of Jerusalem again. But fellow-passengers are forgotten by these two in their deep preoccupation, till One accosts them, overtaking them from behind, and, after a brief demur upon their side, He gets into the talk, and takes it by degrees into His own lips, while they hang upon His words, mile after mile; till now the sun is westering, and here is the village; and—see, the three pause at yonder doorway, and then go in together. We linger near, till the shadows thicken; and now, behold, two of the three come hastening out, with a strange light in their

faces and a new speed in their feet, and we lose sight of them as they go towards Jerusalem again.

For Cleopas and his friend have met the Lord, and have listened to Him till their hearts began to burn, and at last, at supper, they have known Him—and are gone off at once to communicate their almost intolerable joy.

Yes, it is a tale told with a beauty passing literary analysis, for alike the matter and the manner breathe of that mysterious region where meet eternity and time, the supernatural and the natural, man and God. The diction moves without an effort. Never for a moment is there the semblance of an ambition after what we call effect. Yet the artless picture has carried us where the highest art has tried in vain to climb. It has shown us incarnate and risen Deity in familiar converse with two ordinary mortal men; and all falls into beautiful place and scale; we see, we hear, without any difficulty; the scene rests easy and compassable in the hands of our imagination.

Now just here lies that profound inter-texture of beauty and significance to which I alluded just now. For the charm of this immortal story lies largely in the strange facility with which, in it, the supernatural comes upon us in all its mystery and majesty, literally walking and talking with the natural. To depict such a converse has been the attempt not seldom of literary genius; but where has it succeeded?[1] Shakespeare has assuredly failed in "Hamlet." Scott himself admits that he has failed in "The Monastery." But St. Luke succeeds. Was he, from the human view-point, a greater master of imaginative painting than Shakespeare, than Scott, than Virgil, than Milton? Assuredly not. But if not, how shall we account for his literary triumph? By one reasonable solution only—a solution as simple as possible on the one side, as profound and far-reaching as possible upon the other. The masters of literature had to create their

[1] I owe the suggestion of this paragraph to a noble sermon by the Archbishop of Armagh.

material. St. Luke found his ready to his hand. It was their task to compose a scene. It was his to record a veritable incident. The ghost in "Hamlet" was an effort of the fancy. The risen God of Emmaus was fact supreme. And where the literary Raffaelle failed to make his canvas look like reality, the less accomplished hand of the photographer-Evangelist had only to register the tranquil and benignant wonder of the walk and talk of the Risen One with His friends.

The story thus carries deep within it a self-evidencing power. It exists only because that which it presents to us is fact. Its artless, inimitable, unencumbered beauty does something, rightly seen, immeasurably more than *please* the mind; it is capable of reassuring it to its depths, and of lifting it out of I know not what perplexities of mere thought into a certainty, as reasonable as it is believing, that Jesus died and rose again. And when we are sure of that, and take it home, what do we not possess?

Thus regarded, the Emmaus walk begins

to carry to us its wealth of messages, all full of "everlasting comfort and good hope through grace." Set out with the deliberate assurance that this one narrative of the Gospels is firm with the texture of indissoluble fact; let that assurance sink into the soul; water it with reflection, and above all with prayer; give it time to tell its tale to the inmost being—and what may it not be worth to our faith, our hope, our love, in these days of trial for them all?

Consider, with the utmost conciseness, in the way of merest reminder or suggestion, just two of the oracles of peace which meet us at Emmaus.

1. Behold a Lord and Saviour, at once glorious with His finished Sacrifice for our sins and His absolute victory over our death, *and* the Companion, at once Divine and entirely human, of His least conspicuous follower. Ponder that wonderful characteristic of the Christ of God—that His "delights are with the sons of men." Only about twelve hours ago He overcame death,

overwhelmed it in victory, and took to Him what the Epistle to the Hebrews calls "the power of His indissoluble life." Will not an achievement so immeasurable lift Him into a remote and lonely majesty? No; He cannot keep away from the disciples who, two days before yesterday, had all run away from Him and left Him to die. He *must* have their company. It is home and hearth to Him. He does immensely more than condescend to them; He loves them, and with that sort of love which wants and requires a close companionship; which takes pains and lays loving stratagems to win it, and enjoy it when it is done.

2. Consider next the surprising witness of this narrative to the mysterious greatness of the Bible. We live in a day when legitimate literary inquiry has somewhat suddenly distorted itself into a view towards the Divine Book which would leave us, if it were true, instead of an ordered structure of Revelation, a heap of historical and religious ruins. But that was not the view

of the Risen God of the Emmaus road, who spent the hour in expounding to them the Scriptures. And He surely occupied a better point of sight than antiquarian conjecture now can claim, from which to view the origination and shaping of the Scriptures. To Him, fresh from eternity, transcendent, the Prince of Life, that growth appeared ordered all along by a Divine reference to Himself. For its ultimate Author, in His judgment, it had no one less than His Father. For its inmost theme all along it had nothing less than Himself, Messiah, incarnate, suffering, risen again.

My brethren, let us often traverse in heart the reaches of the Emmaus road, and enter the door at its end, and take a humble seat at the evening table there. Let us echo continually the "Abide with us" of Cleopas and his friend spoken to their mysterious but ah, so accessible Companion and Instructor.

When the mind is tempted, perhaps with even unspeakable misgivings, let us leave the stifling chamber of our own troubled cogita-

tions, and walk into that open air, *and rest* in presence of the fact of such a Saviour. Here He stands and walks before us, really risen, actually and supremely living, and moreover personally guaranteeing to us with His own voice the trustworthiness of the Book of hope and heaven; giving it back to us with His own hand, and saying, "Take and read."

And when the heart is faint with grief; when change and losses, actual or impending, gather upon the poor vulnerable soul; when the solitudes of life, never deeper than in its crowds, make their chill felt within us; when

> "Clouds in the evening sky more darkly gather
> And shattered wrecks lie thicker on the strand,"

then let us get us out again into that open air of the Palestinian fields. Behold there a Companion infinitely companionable. He is acquainted perfectly with grief, and He is able to radiate from Himself a joy unspeakable, by the sheer fact of His existence and

His saving love. Seek, and retain His company; you will be very welcome there, and you shall never be alone, till in the eternal Emmaus He withdraws, for you too, His veil, and you see Him as He is.

V

LIFE IN THE LIGHT OF THE RISEN CHRIST

Preached in the University Church, Cambridge, on the Sunday after Ascension Day, 1906.

BEFORE I read my text, let me remind you of Addenbrooke's Hospital, and the appeal made to you to-day. I wish to press home that appeal from my heart to yours. This great and benignant work is positively in financial straits. Year by year it is forced to spend beyond its income to the amount of £1700, and to draw heavily upon capital to pay its way. If a large access of support does not come in, the only prospect left is to close wards and reduce the staff. Actually, the magnificent advances made of late years by surgery, while they vastly multiply the possibilities of curative operation, tend to make every great hospital costlier to work. Disease is combated with

an always growing success by the surgeon, but the campaign demands always a finer and more extensive apparatus. We are warned that this and other absolute exigencies of development may soon lead to a serious curtailment of the work of Addenbrooke's for sheer want of means. Will you let it be so? Translate the word "curtailment" into terms of practical life. Think of the scores of working homes where some well-loved sufferer is, if possible, to be got into the Hospital. Can it be done? Is there a bed ready? It is a question to that home of infinite importance. The disappointment will be like a sentence of death. But this shall not be so, so far as we can answer for it. You will, yes, you will, with a thoughtful and willing sacrifice, help to provide the suffering poor of Christ freely with that wonderful boon—the union of perfect skill and perfect kindness which a hospital of the quality of ours eminently offers. Do I not speak to some here who know, in their own persons, in their own

homes, what is a patient's gratitude to doctor and to nurse when some great and perhaps distressing sickness has been, under God, exorcised by the magic power of healing care? I am myself one such person. Shall we not do what we can to make our experience more accessible to less advantaged lives? I am confident that the appeal will not be in vain. A great offertory to-day, and a solid increase besides of stated contribution, shall cheer the friends of this most noble institution of our town.

And now, I read my text:

Phil. iii. 20: "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

For the second time in my life I am permitted to stand in this place upon the Sunday after the Ascension. Nineteen years have passed by since the first occasion, and a new and different age, alike for the individual, for the world, and for the Church, is spread about us. "Change in all around I see;" in some things "decay," in others hope and growth, but in all things change.

Yet to-day as of old I find one fact, one Name, unchangeable as it is supreme. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day. I spoke of Jesus Christ the Lord then. Let me speak again to you now, O my brethren, of Jesus Christ the Lord.

"Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour." I resist the desire to linger over the word "conversation," and to discuss it among other possible English renderings of the πολίτευμα of St. Paul. It must be enough now, for the matter is not vital to my main present aim, just to express my belief that the Apostle uses the word (this, as I think, the grammar close beside it indicates) almost equally of citizenship and city, so as to allow the rendering, "our seat of citizenship," or, "our citizenship as to its seat." But there is no need to dwell on this detail. The message of the sentence, in its width and depth, does not hinge upon this at all. Render πολίτευμα nearly as we

will, the assurance still emerges that the Christian has a supernatural organic relation with the abode and the life of the Blessed, and such a relation as to govern conduct to its heart. He has upon him the obligations of a nobility which consists in his being the fellow-citizen of the just made perfect, as they live gathered around Him who is at once the gate, the light, and the life of the eternal Jerusalem.

His is an existence on earth ruled by a profound connexion with the heavens — a connexion conditioned by the certainty that the Lord Christ is there, personally, and in His bodily glory; that all the while He is in vital contact with His followers below; and that He is coming again to them from thence, for final and transcendent purposes of purity and bliss.

The passage is thus a specimen, a splendid specimen, of the beliefs which in the primeval Church circled about the Ascension of the Lord. And it illustrates to perfection the bearing which those beliefs had upon

the spirit and conduct of the believers. Let us think for a little how it was so.

Stating the matter rapidly and in outline, the primeval Christian is seen here as a man dominated by a threefold certainty. First, he is certain that the Risen Jesus is to be thought of as definitely gone into heaven. Then he is certain that this exaltation is no isolation; rather it gives the man a living and tenacious hold, in his Lord, upon the heavenly life, its purpose, its morals, its power. And then his assurance of a present part and lot with heaven is fired all through with the power of a wonderful hope, which almost wings his spirit upward already to anticipate the fulfilment. The Ascended One is yet to descend again for His crowning miracle of almighty love. The Christian man looks for his Lord with an awestruck yet all-animating forecast, full of a worshipping and trustful love. To render, as closely as possible, to its end, the grand context of the text: he "awaits from heaven, as Saviour,

the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall transfigure the body of our humiliation into essential likeness to the body of His glory, according to"—no mere speculative possibilities, worked out from our obscure experience of matter and of will, but "according to the energy of His capacity to subdue even all things to Himself."

You recognize (let me repeat it), in this presentation of the primitive Christian's threefold thought of his vanished Lord, no more than one sample out of many. That same state of faith and hope colours all the Epistles, and they manifestly take for granted, in this matter, a unanimous Christian attitude. Everywhere in them you have, in the first place, the full conviction that the Risen One has truly passed, in the sense of a known event, into the upper world. "It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is also at the right hand of God;" "God hath highly exalted Him, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places"; "Set your affec-

tion on the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God"; "He was received up in glory"; "He entered in once into the holy place"; "He is gone into heaven, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.'

Such is the original faith as mirrored in the apostolic letters. It is seen to be just the same when mirrored in narrative. At Pentecost St. Peter, passingly, and as if referring to a matter of unopposed and general knowledge, says to the multitudes that for a season "the heavens must receive" Jesus. St. Stephen looks up, in the Spirit, and there, in the supreme light, stands, as if risen from the throne, Jesus. Stephen's adversary, so soon to be his successor, hears the most human of utterances articulated from that same region as he lies blinded upon the road: "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, I am Jesus."

This aboriginal tenet of the Ascension (let us note it again) knows no vagueness in its

tenure. The departure into the skies is taken for a fact as concrete and as assured as the rising from the grave. And this was so, we may remember, while some at least of the written allusions to the Ascension looked back to the alleged event over a tract of time no longer than that, for example, which divides us to-day from the Treaty of Berlin.

This settled, open, and victorious certainty was meantime all the deeper for the Christian then, and is all the more impressive now for us because it came steeped in moral power. Always it was the vehicle not of an unbalanced exaltation, but of a working virtue, born in heaven but domiciled and at home upon the earth. Like the supernatural of the Gospel generally, it was infinitely remote in spirit and quality from beliefs which we commonly associate with the word "occult"—a word which, by the way, I use with a serious estimate of the gravity of many of the phenomena it covers. But the Biblical mysteries come to us breathing the open air of historical event, and speaking in-

variably the language of repentance, holiness, and worship. Above all, they are all radiated from the Person of the incarnate Lord of law, and love, and grace, and truth. Let us trust God well enough, and also let us trust man, made in His image, well enough to be sure that the supernatural, so conditioned, though it goes back, as it must do, into the abyss of the unknown, came out to the first Christians, and comes out to us, with the certainty of fact and with the embraces of an eternal love.

And now, a little more in detail. What was the moral significance of the faith of the Ascension to those Philippian disciples? Ask rather, what was it not to them? It was the supreme warrant of their own emancipation, promised and certain, from the bondage of corruption; for their own "life was hid with" the ascended "Christ in God." It was their heart's way direct into the Holiest; for Christ was gone there as their Forerunner, their High Priest and Intercessor, their Advocate with the Father, not before but actually upon His Throne. Nor only was He there;

they could say, with a sublime accent of possession, that they "*had*" Him there; "*We have* a great High Priest, who is passed into the heavens." In the ascended Jesus they could think of the dread Unseen with thoughts (unknown on earth before) of glowing cheer. To die now was not to stumble down into the sepulchral shadows of an underworld: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit"; "To depart" was "to be with Christ"; to "quit home in the body" was to "get home, ἐνδημῆσαι, to the Lord."

Meanwhile His exaltation was no isolation of Him even for the time. Mediated to them by the Holy Ghost, His Presence was theirs every day and everywhere, in a profound reality, wholly other than a mere resultant or reflection of their own thinking and feeling. For them always "the Lord was near": ὁ Κύριος ἔγγυς. They could resort to Him at every turn: "I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me." Now and then an impression as upon the senses was vouchsafed, as to St. Paul at Corinth, and in the

Antonian Castle, and in his final scene, when (as he tells us himself in that last letter to Timothy, wet with human tears) he stood alone at the unjust tribunal: "Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and gave me power." But these abnormal mercies were only signals and open specimens of the normal. With every faithful follower, "all the days, and all day long," not only was the glorified Christ present; He was in the man, and he in Him; around him as his atmosphere and life, in him as his peace and power; a spell invincible by sorrow, and fear, and pain, and toil, and sin. He was inseparably thus; it was an intimacy transcending all other friendship, all other love. Yet the Companion was all the time the King, who for His vassal had triumphed and then sat down to reign.

Then also, in a world out of which hope, as a formative power, had practically died, the primitive Christian lived a life young and vernal in the glow of a great "hope through grace," resting direct upon his vanished yet

present Lord. Nothing was more definite to him than the promise of the return of that same Jesus. To this the whole texture of the Epistles, from earliest to latest, bears manifold witness; from where the Thessalonians are seen "waiting for the Son of God from heaven" to where, in the latest evening of the apostolic time, a voice is heard articulating the promise that one day "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is"; and also the warning that we must not dare *not* to abide in Him, "lest if at any time He appear," we should be "shamed away from before Him at His coming."

This is no place to examine even one detail of the great mystery of the *Parousia*. But it is enough to remember how ruling, how transfiguring a fact was the expectation, how large and weighty must have been the promise of it to which the Christ committed Himself, and then, to prepare for its fulfilment, withdrew into the heavens.

So those Christians of the prime lived their life under a sky illuminated by the Ascension.

The fact of that majestic and deliberate Disappearance entered into all they thought and did. It gave decision and a Divine daylight to their idea of the unseen Paradise. It gave to their souls a tranquil certainty of access into the Holiest Place, the inmost *Adytum* of the moral universe. It glorified their rich experience of the spiritual Companionship of their Redeemer by the certainty of the actual and perfected triumph of their wonderful Friend over every limitation. And the future could only contribute to the holy forces and pleasures of the present, as they recollected His own promise, upon His Divine honour, to return.

The Ascension coloured all their pathway with the light and warmth of an almost visible glory. Yet observe that it made that pathway only the more real, the more practically and soberly important, beneath their feet. Taught as the Apostles taught them, illuminated as the Spirit of understanding illuminated their wise meekness, they well perceived that while nothing so disorganizes life, and inverts all its practical proportions, as an unauthentic

and fanatical religionism, nothing so balances life, and purifies it, and makes its humblest duties sacred, and its simplest pleasures beautiful, and its sternest tasks and heaviest griefs lovable and manageable, as the authentic vision of the Almighty, out of whose will comes to-day as well as eternity, and "in whose will is our peace" to-day.

But if it were so for them then, it is meant to be so for us now; and it shall be so. The power of the faith of the Ascension is just as opportune for the twentieth age as for the first, if it was ever opportune at all. If our Lord Jesus Christ was ascended then, when St. Paul sent this letter to Philippi, He is ascended now, while we are worshipping here in Cambridge. True, the years are many, and we are deep "in the midst" of them, and the silence of the heavens to us—though not to the Eternal Love—seems long. But the silent heavens have meanwhile been operative upon earth. The witness to Christ of almost two millenniums has gathered slowly around us—the vast witness of Christian moral revolu-

tions, of Christian social elevations, none the less real because the consciences which the Lord has quickened rebel more and more acutely against felt defects. Above all, there has been, and there is, the witness of the saints in their innumerable numbers—the witness of Christian holiness and love in life and death; a phenomenon altogether of its own sort, and impossible without the Christ of revelation, the Lord incarnate, sacrificed, risen, ascended, expected, trusted, dwelling in the heart by faith. To Him the very stones indeed cry aloud in testimony; for what arch or pillar of this great temple, for example, would ever have been reared but for a triumphant Jesus? But to Him, in far more massive evidence, the opened depths of the regenerated soul cry out, as He enters in, and verifies by His sanctifying love the destination of that dwelling-place for nothing else than that Indweller.

To-day as then, Christ is gone up on high. To-day as then, Christ, by the Spirit, is divinely present in the assembly and in the heart. And as surely to-day as then it

stands fast that Christ shall return again, Star of the eternal dawn, Sun of the everlasting summer day.

Aye, and thus also, now as then, the faith of the Ascension is meant to tell upon our life with the operative touch of gentle and omnipotent hands. It did so at Philippi. The context of our text is absolutely practical, moral, holy. The disciples there were beset by a world of gross ideals; and the very Church itself was already infected by filthy dreamers, who actually in the name of Christ violated virtue and took lustful pleasures for their good. It is in face of such a moral horror that St. Paul here lays hands on his converts, and commands them to look up and recollect their citizenship above, and their hope of the glorification of the body. And do not we, we also, need that Divine antidote to-day? We live in a period whose most formidable peril lies in the degradation of ideals—the ideals of duty, of self-discipline, of self-sacrifice, of reverence, of home. Do we wish to escape the deterioration that

is in the world, through materialism, through lust of gain, and lust of pleasure, through soulless luxury, through cynicism, through loss of hope? It is dangerous work, my brethren, to let ourselves face such moral enemies carelessly, in the open, as it were, and hand to hand. Keep a broad *distance*, as much as you can, between you and them; and fill that distance full with positive habits of thought looking upwards and towards the Sun. Orpheus defied the Sirens by singing aloud heaven's praises as he sailed past the deadly shore. Friend and brother, accustom yourself to the habitual influence, cultivated in your inmost life, of the Ascended and promised Christ. So you shall, almost without knowing it, overcome the world, assimilating into you its Divine Overcomer.

Do we wish to escape the moral disturbance and loss which comes of a time of unrest and tumultuous contention, dangerous to the man who meets it on its own levels, losing patience, misjudging, misrepresenting,

letting the wrath of man meddle with the righteousness of God? Such a time is upon us now. England is stirred by a great contention connected with religion; and nothing, as a Cambridge sage of long ago said, is so discordant with religion as contention over it. Well, at such a crisis let us recollect the Ascension. Let us at once get a better view of the circumstances, and secure a spirit just so far detached from them as to be the more fit to deal with them, by habituating ourselves to that great influence. St. Paul, in the Ephesian Epistle, in words so strangely daring that they would be incredible, intolerable, if they were not authentically from God, tells us that the Eternal Father has made us Christian men, even now, "to sit together with Christ in the heavenly places." Christian man, be bold to act upon that revelation, to look from that level upon all the tumults of life. Think from that point of sight about conflicts around faith and Church, about contending claims and cries over that sacred and all-

momentous matter, the faith of God and Christ in relation to our nation's children's training for thought and word, for life and death. You will think more collectedly so, and with a better hope that fairness, and kindness, and the right sort of firmness, and a tranquil courage, will be given you as you go on.

Or take another type of this life's trials. Has sorrow come, bringing you one of those great lacerations over which only a shallow kindness can trifle with platitudes about the healing influences of time—that is to say, the dull quietude of reduced sensation? Almost the worst side of such experiences is the temptation to retire inward and downward, as into the grave of the past, till hope wanes out of the present and the future towards an untimely night, and the will to serve is almost lost. Christian man, it must not be so. Invoke on your grief the influences not of time but heaven. Use the *nepenthe* of the creed of the Ascension. In heart and mind ascend to the heaven of

to-day, where Christ sitteth, where "in their quiet chamber safely resting" the spirits of the just, full of the beginnings of the eternal joy, await their consummation, and await you. Anticipate firmly and afresh the heaven of to-morrow, from which shall issue the returning Saviour, not one hour too late, veritably, as He went up, to gather in you with them and them with you. This will not close your wound; and you would not have it closed. But it will do something better; it will fill it with love, with hope, with life, with Christ.

Thus let the Ascension, vivified and glorified by the gift of Pentecost, keep your ideals high as immortality can lift them. Then, be the lower level of circumstance what they may be, it shall be well. You shall "serve your generation by the will of God." You shall be the most practical of Christians, ready to attend with intelligence and love to every call on you for others, their bodies as well as their souls. Such a call as our Hospital makes on you to-day will carry all

your sympathy with it, and you will remember that your purse is Christ's. Yes, disciple of the Ascended, you shall be *in* the world, as its salt and its light. You shall be *for* the world, as your Master's implement for its good. But you shall not be *of* the world; you shall live internally above it. And so at last you shall "fall asleep" to awake, satisfied, in the light now invisible, a loving servant, received by the Ascended Master, to be with Him, where He is.

VI

THE CHRISTIAN STUDENT AND HIS MIND

Preached in Durham Cathedral, before the University, 1906.

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind."—1 PETER i. 13.

IT is my privilege to-day, a privilege sacred to my heart, to preach the Word of God in this revered and beloved place just at the time when the University is about to close another year of life and study. I recognize to the full the significance of the occasion. To myself it presents in vivid association the great concurrent functions of reason and faith, of knowledge and worship, of the intellectual and the spiritual, which the true idea of a University enfolds within its life in an equal intimacy. Most of all must this be so with our own University of Durham, so singularly

marked in its origin and history by a direct filial connexion with the Church of God; a connexion for which we pray a long, a perpetual continuance, such as shall never indeed cramp or dwarf our intellectual energies, nay, such as shall rather quicken, warm, and elevate them all, but which shall always shed around them the thought of God in Christ, in all its majesty, its purity and its hope.

I propose this morning to ask you to think a little with me, as in the peace of the eternal Presence, upon some relations between the mental and the spiritual within us; upon some of their harmonies and co-operations, upon their importance for one another, and particularly upon the importance of the spiritual for the mental. My hope is that our meditation may by no means be, in the unfavourable sense, merely "academical," but that it may bear direct upon the true issues of the true life, the life of man in Christ.

I note then first, as one primary message of my text, the honour put by Holy Scripture upon the intellect of man. The

Greek of St. Peter leaves us in no doubt, in the word διάνοια, that he is thinking here precisely of the intellect, with its cognitions and its reasonings. "Gird up the loins" (he speaks as of some strong man about to run a race), "the loins" not now of your faith, or of your zeal, or of your love, but "of your mind." Address yourselves, with decision, to think. Review your data, tell over your facts and first grounds, till you are perfectly certain, in the sense of a reasonable perception, where you stand. Then link them all together with the logic of relation and of conclusion. Make sure, from the point of mental observation, of the "reason of the hope that is in you"; summon up to the definition of that reason, and to its support, all that you know of yourself, of the world, of history, of man, of Christ, of God; bind these vast certainties together into a strong chain of resultant articles of reasonable conviction; let yourself realize the magnificent fact that your faith, though it deals with the unseen and the hoped-for, far beyond the ken of inferences in detail, and

sometimes against the look of inferences on the surface, yet never for one moment really breaks with your mind as mind. Rather, it is precisely your mind, your reasoning faculty, which itself bids your faith reasonably ascend where it cannot in its own character follow; just as in the great medieval epic a Virgil, himself debarred the upper walks of light and bliss, can bid a Dante, whom he has led to the gate, go inward and upward beyond him, yea, to the region of the beatific vision of the Triune Love.

"Gird up the loins of your mind," the forces of your thinking power. Let us never forget that this exhortation lies not only in the Holy Bible but in the very heart of one of its transcendently spiritual paragraphs. The Apostle here is full of the resurrection glory of the Lord, of the "joy unspeakable" in Him to which His true followers even now are called, and of that wonderful prospect, His desired, His promised Return, "the Appearing of Jesus Christ." Well, for St. Peter, amidst just this crowded scene of spiritual mysteries

and raptures, *the human mind* is called all the while to walk and act. It is summoned, so and there, to self-discipline, to resolution, to energy and enterprise: "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end."

I was about to compare the mind, in this wonderful collocation of it with the great spiritual graces, to the Homeric chariot-horse in the yoke of Achilles, the mortal courser beside his immortal fellows: ὃς καὶ θνητός ἐὼν ἕπεθ' ἵπποις ἀθανάτοισι. But I will not do so. For the mind, the perceptive, and cognitive, and connective power within us, is not mortal; it is destined for an eternal exercise. The same great paragraph of St. Paul which tells us that faith, hope, and love will survive into immortality tells us that the perceptions of the mind will live with them in their eternal life: "*then shall I know*, even as also I was known."

So let us hail this Divine hallowing of the fact and function of the human intellect. Pious Christians have been accused sometimes of going the other way, and of re-

garding the intellect as if its energies, in the regions, for example, of science, or of history, or of number, or its glorious pleasures in the fair fields of imagination, were in themselves unhallowed. I remember a sarcasm, levelled, very long ago, against a supposed characteristic phrase of Christian preachers—"the unsanctified intellect." True, the intellect if unsanctified, like the eyes if unsanctified, and the tongue if unsanctified, that is to say, if divorced from Christian reverence and purity, may be used for deadly mischief by the evil Power which watches for our eternal ruin. And true also it is that the Bible, from this point of view, is never weary of warning man of the narrowness, the fallacy, the imbecility of his mind, when he arrogates for it a right to think against its Maker's holiness and love. "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man that they are vain"; "Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and revealed them unto babes"; "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." But this is no more to

say that the mind is in itself a profane thing than to say that the body is profane because of its awful possible misuse. And who does not know that it is precisely the Bible which proclaims all along, in one way or another, the mysterious sacredness of the body, and reveals, in Christ, its destiny to a deathless glory?

Therefore, Christian student, reverence your mind. No matter for the moment whether it be large or small in stature, whether it be yet developed into a splendid maturity or be still only getting by degrees and imperfectly to its puberty. It is yours from God. In His perfect plan it is His organ in you for activities and achievements which He has not assigned to what we commonly mean by the more strictly spiritual faculties. Nourish it and cherish it; discipline it by well-ordered exercise; give it pure and true material to deal with, to handle, to arrange, and mould, and build. Take its tasks with all the seriousness of conscience. Take its pure and elevating enjoyments, in their right place and measure, heartily and without a doubt.

Love it, and use it, and rejoice in every proved development of its capacities. For the Holy Spirit of wisdom and of understanding is Author of the intellectual in man.

But now upon the other hand let us think a little of the influence which the spiritual, in its common Christian sense, is meant manifestly in the plan of God to exercise upon the mental in us. To speak quite popularly, —but the popular here is abundantly accurate enough for our purpose— what is the soul meant to do for the mind? How is the student, how is the thinker, intended (in the scheme of our nature) to be the better student and the better thinker for being also, by Divine grace, a worshipper, a believer, a Christian, in spirit and in truth?

I answer first that for *some* such beneficial power of soul on mind we must assuredly look as a matter of course, if we who think about it hold the Christian theory of man. If we do so, we believe that the heart and radiating centre of our human personality is the image of God within us. We believe, with

the very largest and amplest warrant from the Divine Book, answering (as that Oracle always does, read aright) to our own profoundest consciousness, that we finite and dependent beings bear nevertheless the infinite within us. Not only is the mysterious cogitative power itself, with its "thoughts that wander through eternity," always transcending the visible, the material, the narrowly intelligible. That other mystery, importunate, august, imperative, imperial, the voice of Conscience, impossible ever adequately to explain as merely a resultant of ourselves, is evermore asserting within us our relation, at the basis of our being, to the Supreme Existence as at once Law and Person, Holiness and Will. We know, in presence of conscience, unless we are artificially resisting our own nature, that we are, in a sense transcending all other relations, related to God. That consciousness bursts in upon us across all other matter of our inner world, whenever the occasion offers. Let the intellect be busy with ever such abstruse problems; for example, let it be intent upon

the science of matter and of force, upon the very last and most subtle speculations of inductive natural philosophy;—and then let the thinker be arrested on a sudden, just there, by some intrusive question of right and wrong in his own conduct. *He knows which claim is predominant.* Not all the scientific investigations in the world dare, in the supreme order to which his soul bears witness, to take precedence within him over that awful sanctity, the command to be pure, and to do right. And when to the witness which is thus borne by nature to our part and lot in eternity is added the witness of grace; when the soul is awakened from on high "to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent"; then more than ever, profoundly more, does the man know that while his intellect is as truly as ever the gift of God, the glorious implement given him *by* his Maker, and *for* his Maker, the soul is the very organ of the central and eternal Presence in him; the sanctuary of the "temple of the Spirit"; the place where the whole being,

will, affections, intellect, physique, must listen for the voice of ultimate truth and absolute command. The Christian knows, as by a new intuition into necessary relations, what it means to be not a man only but a man fallen, a man redeemed, a man justified and sanctified, "in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." It means the sublime supremacy within him of the things of the soul.

With absolute clearness then, to the Christian, the spiritual, because it is the root, must supremely affect the right development and use of the mental, which is the branch and leaf; or, to vary the metaphor, the spiritual as centre, geared and adjusted direct upon God, is of untold significance to the right movement of the swift circumference, the mind.

Can I forbear to pause a moment here in the main drift of our thought, and remark on the significance of these facts of our nature for the present great religious problem in English national life? The contention of us

who plead with all the energy we can for a retention in our schools of a defined (however uncontroversial) religious teaching, given (which is all-important) by religious teachers, is animated at its centre, I think, not by poor sectarian jealousies but by a profound conviction that because man is man, made in the Divine image, the training of the children of the race has in it not only a defect but a defect fatally close to the root of the whole being, if it is not true to the revelation of God in Christ. But I say this only by the way.

Now finally, and in briefest review, what will be in particular the significance, what the influence, of the soul for the understanding? In two momentous directions, in the Christian student's life, it will act as a power of untold benefit. In the first place it will come in always to caution and to humble, to teach the glorious modesty of worship, to bring the man, with all the materials and processes of his knowledge, into right relations of thought with the ultimate and

infinite glory of his Maker, the Author of his being, the Father of his spirit. It will save him from that absurd and most dangerous opinion that true thought has nothing to do with fear; as if awe meant cowardice; as if premiss could be complacently linked to premiss, till even blasphemous conclusions should result, and yet there should be no need to pause and worship a little, and then go back to see if some link of the eternal sort has not been omitted from the chain.

In instances endless in number, and of untold import to man's view of truth, it is just that lack of the fear which has in it no torment, and no tyranny, but which has a wealth of salutary humbling, which has led to the doleful vagaries of atheistic theory, and yet more to the atheistic *tone;* to the sounding brass of soulless thinking; to the mental state in which man can contemplate the universe and history and yet fail to worship infinite Mind, infinite Personality, within it and above it; till "all creation cannot pierce below the bottom of the eye."

The soul, whispering to the intellect its suggestions of a godly fear, bids it look upward, as from its knees; and assuredly the intellect loses neither in range of vision, nor in truth of vision, for that look.

And here the first line of influence merges naturally into the second. If the spiritual is the wholesome humbler and cautioner of the intellectual, it is also to the very full the power of all others to animate the intellectual, and elevate it, and dilate it into an ever-growing maturity, lifting it almost as it were from its feet upon its wings. The witness within us, affirmed and amplified by the Revelation from above us, of our own mysterious significance as the offspring of God, and of the spiritual glory of creation as based for its being on His will, and ordered in all its unfathomable hosts and kingdoms by His indwelling virtue—this gives to thought upon every subject worth thinking of, a dignity, an importance, an even sacred interest, which is able to raise it to the highest levels. This is obvious where the

mind is busy with truths of the directly religious order; but not in those cases only. The student of human history, the student of the history of nature, animate or inanimate, the investigator of number and figure, the explorer of the literary monuments of the mind, of old civilisations, of modern evolutions of man's life and energy—all are to feel that power; each and all are to find not only a cautioning but a magnificently inspiring influence in the perpetual recollection that he, the student, and every one of his fellow-men, is a spiritual being, made in the image of the eternal Wisdom and Love, redeemed from his fall by the action of the Eternal, borne onward by His grace ~~(as regards the purpose of the Divine mercy)~~ to an eternal destiny of bliss, and holiness and loving power; and that every range of existence, every law of thought, bears profound relation to Him, the Son, the Word, the Christ, "in whom are hid all the treasures of knowledge," and who is not only the Head of the Church, nor only the Lover

of the soul, but also the Keystone of the universe of creation; "in Him all things consist."

No wonder then, for it is not by accident but by a deep and holy law, that we find so often in the history of thought that the great thinker is even more the humble worshipper, and that his worship does but raise and amplify his thought.

So Newton, dying, spoke of his pebbles picked from the beach while the ocean of eternal truth rolled its unfathomed fields before him. So Butler, troubled in his saintly soul, as he drew near eternity, by the thought of the infinite Holiness, stayed himself in death, like a little child, upon the text, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." So Sedgwick, patriarch of English geology, passed to his Redeemer's presence, near his ninetieth year, murmuring out, "Washed in the blood of the Lamb, sanctified by the Holy Spirit." So Clerk Maxwell, illustrious name in the first ranks of modern science, all too early called away,

in his noble "Student's Evening Hymn," sung to his Lord the prayer,

> "Through the creatures Thou hast made
> Show the brightness of Thy glory;
> Be eternal truth display'd
> In their substance transitory."

So John Herschel, even in his sleep, said to his soul, in words written down on his awaking—

> "Throw thyself on thy God, nor mock Him with feeble denial,
> Sure of His love and O sure of His mercy at last;
> Bitter and deep though the draught, yet drain thou the cup of thy trial,
> And in its healing effects smile at the bitterness past."

So Brewster exclaimed in the hour of his transition, "I will see JESUS, who made the worlds, and that will be grand."

Yes, these princes of the intellectual kingdom, full of the mind, were lifted yet higher by the forces of the spirit. For they did not think only, but also worshipped at the feet of Him who is the eternal Wisdom as He is the eternal Truth, and Life, and

Way, and who said, as He re-enacted the sacred law which embraces our whole inward being: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

VII

THE FORMATIVE POWER OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST

Preached in Emmanuel Church, Leeds, before Members of the University, 1908.

"The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."—PHIL. iii. 8.

THE setting of these words is warm and vivid with the movement of the human heart. As continually in the Christian Scriptures, so here, the affirmation of spiritual truth, even in its most defined and technical forms, is presented not in a vacuum but in intimate contact with the emotions and experiences of man. The wonderful man who in this passage is discoursing to us about many revealed mysteries of spiritual gladness, and liberty, and growth, and the call to a present sanctity, and the prospect of a coming glory, is doing this not by way of a lecture, or even of a detached appeal. He speaks as one who lays bare to us his own deep soul, and

tells us what to his own inmost self the Christ has come to be. Upon His excellencies he dilates in the accent of one who has first, not without a tremendous moral conflict, himself laid his all at His feet, and has himself received into his soul the wonderful beginnings of an eternal purity and joy as the gift of His hands. The things that were gain to him he has counted loss for Christ. Yes, all that he has possessed, or could possess otherwise, is loss to him, for the excellency, for the surpassing betterness, of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.

I touch thus upon the living environment of the text just that I may call your attention to this profound characteristic of the whole Biblical literature, but eminently of its New Testament portion. The Book, as a whole, definitely claims to be not the best thought of man, striving upward, but the communication of God to man, stooping downward, or let us say rather, coming downward with the invitations and embraces of an eternal personal lovingkindness. But

that communication it makes to us always through the organ and channel of the human soul. Apostles and Evangelists are not merely taught a formula by rote and sent out to repeat it. The formula of salvation, the message of the life eternal, is first passed as a profound experience through their own spiritual being, and first fills with awe and joy their own conscience, and convictions, and affections, and then and so they are to go to the world with a message mingled vitally with their deepest selves. It is a phenomenon pregnant of suggestion, and I think that in the history of religions it finds not even a colourable parallel.

But I do not intend to expand this reflection before you to-day. It will be felt, I think, to have much to do with my main theme. But the theme itself can be detached from the context of St. Paul's burning experiences, and contemplated apart. And my theme is this, the educative power (if I may venture to use the phrase) of the spiritual knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ;

the informing, cultivating, deepening, uplifting effect which lies latent in it for the whole inward world and its activities. The knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, when it is knowledge indeed, is able to tell with results most noble and comprehensive upon all the three great aspects or attitudes of the personality, alike upon the mind, the will, and the affections of the man.

I am permitted to-day to address a University congregation. And your University is a modern University. We take it for granted that such an academic institution aims, with a certain concentrated directness and practicality, for all its students, at the strictest discipline of the mental faculty, and at the severest elimination from its programme of the ephemeral, the inaccurate, the unverifiable, and all which really belongs to the category of the outworn. Well, not the less for this, but all the more, I seize these my moments of privilege confidently to claim your attention, full in view of the ideal of your life and studies, for a reverential

recognition of the fact of the Christ of God, and of the potency for your whole work, and your whole selves behind your work, of the excellency of the knowledge of Him.

That the Christ of God is fact, that the supreme Personage of the New Testament was and is historical reality, I do little more to-day than affirm. But I affirm it with a profound feeling of the immeasurable largeness of the witness to it. I dare to say, all the more confidently after old misgivings (for who that thinks and feels is insensible to the drifts of troubled thought around him, to say nothing of drifts that rise within him?) that the hypothesis that the Jesus of the Gospels and the Epistles is what they say He was, and did what they say He did, including the bearing of our sins and the complete triumph over our death, is the one hypothesis which fully fits some of the hardest and most concrete facts of the present hour. It alone, to speak as materially as possible, accounts for the existence of the building where we meet. For only the trans-

cendent and triumphant Christ would ever have come to have even one temple built for His worship. It alone accounts for yonder Table of the sacred Communion. It alone accounts for a Christendom which not only exists but, for all its faults and sorrows, tends evermore to rise in newness of life even from its declines. And then, it alone properly accounts for the lives of the saints. And I mean the saints not of painted windows only, and calendars, and acts of martyrs. I am thinking most of the saints of the home, the workshop, and the study. I have in view common tasks done in the peace of God, common sorrows, common sufferings, borne so as to be transfigured, borne meekly and with joy, and that upon a height to which the ice-peak of the Stoic is a dead level; and all in the name, and only in the name, of the Incarnate and Crucified; in the power, unique and wholly beyond a complete analysis, of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord.

To His reality, so I am bold to maintain,

witnesses all that in our being is most central, most aboriginal, most essential, when once it is indeed awake. And whatever may seem to question or to negative His living glory, comes rather from the surface and circumference of our being, where artificial rather than natural questionings have readiest play.

But now, this knowledge of Him, let us think a little about it, in regard of its power upon our nature, to educate and to cultivate it towards its highest issues. For once more, this is my theme. I hold that not only in the field of strictly religious thought, emotion, or action, but for all the serious purposes of life, there resides in the knowledge of Christ an uplifting, invigorating, and refining influence. Mind, will, affections, in all their true exercises and outgoings, are the better within us for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.

1. The mind, alike in the larger and its narrower references of the word, alike as the logical faculty and as the whole perceptive and receptive reason, is capable of noble

benefits by the knowledge, contemplative and experiential, of the Christ of Revelation. In His Person, in the mystery of the union under it of the supreme Nature with the human, in the scope and method of His redeeming operation, the mind of man has for ages found a field of thought as profound, as subtle, and as elevated as possible, quite as truly as the soul has found there her inmost sanctuary of worship. A French philosopher (I think it is Victor Cousin) has remarked that the European intellect owes more than we can well calculate to the study and discussion, through the ages, particularly in the centuries from St. Augustine downwards, of the doctrines of Christianity. And the doctrines of Christianity, what are they, analysed to their essence? They are nothing if not aspects and issues of the Person and of the work of Jesus Christ. Among those aspects, let us never forget, is the tenet, quite as old as the Apostles, of the relation of the Eternal Word, the Son, the Christ, to the existence and the harmony of the material

universe. "All things were made through Him"; "All things were made for Him"; "In Him all things hold together." The Logos of the Christian theology is revealed not only as the Head of the Church but also and equally as the Corner-stone of Creation. The student of nature who has caught a glimpse of the glory of the immanent and transcendent Christ sees phenomena not less but more truly, because with a profounder sense of their depth and pregnancy of significance, and finds a light-giving sanctity shed around them all because of what he knows of their living Cause and Bond. No wonder that Brewster, dying, burst into words of almost impatient expectation on the borders of the unseen: "I will see *Jesus*," he exclaimed, "and that will be grand; I will see *Jesus*, who made the worlds."

Is not the intellect all the better adjusted for its minutest and most delicate exercises when kept in a contact, living and reverent, with the idea of the universal and eternal? In Christ Jesus the Lord, as the Christian

student sees Him, those ideas take a new light and life in one transcendent personal Reality. The refining, clarifying power of that sight can descend into every process of observation and of inference, and lift and develope it to its best.

2. And when we come to the central mystery of the will, to man as he puts what he knows and is into deliberate action, can we not perceive that great and wonderful is the power that resides upon him and within him by the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord? Alike the excesses of the will and its defects find in that knowledge their sublime while intimate antidote. And this antidote works not only through the faultless law given us in the teaching of Christ, as He puts the pride and selfish hardness of the will to shame, and summons it as by the trumpet of heaven out of its weakness and languor to an unconquerable courage. It comes by the knowledge of Him as the living Companion, worshipped, yet loved with a personal friendship which evermore assimi-

lates the disciple to the Master. To know Him, in spirit and in truth, to know Him in that mysterious but real fellowship to which He explicitly invites us, is to receive into our will the sacred magnetism of His. It is to get our will adjusted thus to precisely such directions as are noblest, gentlest, least selfish, and most largely fruitful for the common life. It is to get it empowered with precisely that tranquil energy which, having Him for its perpetual cause, can move indomitably on, in the cause of truth and good.

3. And then, and finally, what has the excellency of this supreme and yet most tender knowledge to do with the life of the affections? Man's power to love, to go out of himself and, in the words of Leibnitz, as he seeks to define love, "to delight himself in the felicity of another"—how is it lifted and glorified by the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord? Ask, rather, what is *not* the benefit which passes into man in his affections from that all-beautiful and benignant influence? And here again, the

benefit comes not only through the perfect precept of the Lord. It flows from that contact of the whole inner man with Him which alone is worthy to be called the knowledge of Him. To know Him thus is to know the supreme Love incarnate. It is to be intimate with the God who so greatly "found His delight in the felicity of others" that for us men and for our salvation He become Man of man, Son of woman, one with us for ever, who died for us, and rose again.

What will result within us, in the sphere of the affections, from such a fellowship with Him? Not only a great love for His adorable Self, a love deep as the soul, tranquil but ineffable. Knowledge of Christ will breathe a new life, a new glory, a new power to expand and to fulfil itself, into every pure human affection all the while. The blessed charities of life are all enforced and vivified by the excellency of that knowledge. Away with the cloudy dream that to love Christ supremely means the falling of a chill over the love of heart for heart in our human converse here. True, it assures its due

primacy in the soul and its affections for the name of JESUS, supreme in love and in loveliness for ever. But out of the glory of that central love every true affection only gathers an ever larger depth and tenderness, and lives and moves with an unselfish and limitless power, impossible to be found where the Christ of God is not known as heart of heart and soul of soul.

Come, then, and let us address ourselves afresh to this sacred science, the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. Let us approach it with a resolved and deliberate attention which will prove infinitely worth the while. Let us find time, let us make it, even in the life otherwise most full, for the consideration of Him, for the study of the record and revelation of His glory. And then we shall find our knowledge of Him, as we use it, as we live by it and live in it, to be the very power of God for the growth and greatness of our being in every aspect and issue of its true life below, till we pass upward at last to be fully like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

VIII

WISE MEN AND SCRIBES

Preached in the Chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge, at the Annual Commemoration of Benefactors, December 1907.

"Behold, I send unto you wise men and scribes."—ST. MATT. xxiii. 34.

THE context of these words is dark and formidable. It makes part of that tremendous arraignment of evil under the mask of good with which our Lord, now on the verge of His Cross and His triumph, assailed the ecclesiastical leaders of His time, denouncing in their persons the moral mischief which always beyond all others called out His most ruthless censure—the sanctity which is merely official and mechanical, the harsh devoutness of only the letter and the form. But from that context I now detach the text, to consider it altogether in itself. The Lord's incidental intimation that wise men and

scribes, true thinkers and counsellors, true students and teachers, can be God's gift, the missioners and vehicles of His will, I place here before you as a substantive theme, hoping that it may make a message true for this place and hour.

It is a place and an hour profoundly moving to your preacher. This College, this Chapel; the whole life of Trinity, including its worship; the entire educative power working here upon mind and soul—how can I help feeling the impression of it all, almost as if for the first time, as I stand here invited to minister the word of God before you? So deep and ample is the debt which as an old *alumnus* I owe to this great house that I can believe (I may at least be permitted to feel) that no son of its vast family owes more to its influences than I do. Thought goes back to the remote moment when as a child, in the autumn of 1850, I first entered this Chapel, while Walmisley's hands traversed the organ-keys in the opening voluntary; and then it passes to another October, ten years later,

when first I worshipped here, a wearer of the blue gown; and to yet another, five years afterwards again, when, kneeling in the Master's stall after election, I placed my hands within Whewell's hands, the last man ever admitted into Fellowship by him. Then comes up in recollection a later time, when after a long absence I lived again within the gates, amidst a circle of colleague friends and undergraduate friends ever dear to my heart. Well may a man feel, in face of such days past, that the place and its life has entered into his very being, and has so acted upon it that he cannot easily think that Trinity ever told much more powerfully upon any of its members.

It came naturally to me then, with the call to preach at Commemoration, to wish to use the opportunity for some discourse upon those influences as I felt them. It seemed possible that this might be done with a worthier aim than that merely of the expression of a sentiment, however sincere and strong. It might be that the theme could actually serve and

assist in some modest measure the work of those who are to-day the teachers, the guides, the formative exemplars of the College. For not even the mind most wakeful and most sensitive can always see its daily and normal opportunity with perfect freshness and illumination. The comments of an observer, detached while sympathetic, even his simplest and most obvious comments upon possibiiities and ideals, may strike a new and useful light over the familiar field for the worker within it, and may show, by the memento of a moment, the greatness always latent everywhere beneath its face.

So I have been living over again in some sort that long-departed undergraduate time. I have attempted to recollect the influences and examples which most effectually handled and shaped thought, purpose, and habit in those days so genial, that *amicum tempus* as indeed it proved itself in a hundred ways to be. Not now have I dwelt upon the character and influence of my coevals. I have turned rather to the "wise men and the scribes"

who were the teachers and elder friends of our generation; and more than ever the heart has recognised in them the gift and sending of God, noble illustrations of the living power which can go out from leading personalities upon the college-world. Many a face and voice of that period has lived anew before me in these meditations. The great Master has stood out in sight, in all his physical and mental stature; again has been felt the awe and distance which hedged him to our eyes, yet withal the certainty of his unflagging dutifulness and his worshipping faith. Again has been visible Sedgwick's aged face, strong and rugged as his own rocks, grandly vivid with human feeling and Christian hope. Jeremie, the old man eloquent, has seemed to unfold again his large learning and luminous thought with the controlling magic of that silver voice. Thompson, pale and stately, has been present to the mind's eye, the kind friend of later years, when he was Master and I was Dean, the Greek Professor of that earlier period, who filled Carus' lecture-

room with classes equally instructed and delighted whether Aristotle or Aristophanes was the author. Munro and Cope have seemed once more to walk out together, *par nobile*, diverse and intimate, masters alike of a vast and refined erudition, wielded by the one with the fervour, and by the other with the patience, of genius. The mind has listened again to William George Clark, as he expounded the classics with the touch, firm and free, of the accomplished man of English letters. Then, coming nearer to personal affections—for it is coming to men to whom I owe a peculiar gratitude for generous and admirable help in private—memory has lived again with two of my three dear Tutors. James Lemprière Hammond is the one, untiring in his friendly and encouraging care, admirably stimulating by the contagious force and alertness of his mind. Robert Burn is the other, the man of unconscious and unaffected greatness, of equal strength and gentleness, without fear of reproach as ruler and example; the face on which it was good to look, the

intellect capacious at once of massive knowledge and of purest literary scholarship, the soul which, with English reticence, let the lips say little of the inner life of faith but which could not forbid the shining forth of it into the life. Wonderfully at the last was that faith spoken out, in the very hour of dissolution, in the dawn of the light invisible.

But the time would fail me to recount, name by name, all the departed worthies of the calendar of the heart, our benefactors of old within this dear incomparable place; counting down from those who in our time were the grey fathers of the College to those who, like Henry Sidgwick and Richard Jebb, were seniors to us only by a little. And time fails me also to do more than reverently recite the sacred roll of those other departed sons of Trinity who, within this year, have been called into the other life; some of them memorable for academic achievement; some also for illustrious and permanent labour in science or in letters; one the veteran transatlantic Bishop; one the vigorous helper,

through a long life, of all good causes in my own Durham; one in far distant days scholar and then chaplain of the College; one, the last and by far the youngest, my dear pupil-friend, missionary of the Cross in Egypt—ardent, instructed, and farseeing—cut down like a flower. Peace be to their memory, and greeting go to their spirits—Michael Foster, Frederick Maitland, George Yool, Thomas Barker, Hollingworth Kingdon, Robey Redmayne, John Hastings, Douglas Thornton.

For the remainder of this precious opportunity let me return to the memory of the "wise men and scribes" of my time, and speak a little of yet one other person. Let me recall somewhat in detail what he was, taking him, as I do, to be a singularly true realisation of the high ideal of what a Fellow and officer of this College can be to the young life on which in the providence of God he is called in one way or another to have power.

I have spoken of two Tutors. Let us turn now to my third, their predecessor, sole chief

of the side which on his resignation the two undertook together. How shall I discourse as I would of Joseph Lightfoot?

Before me now, in the path of daily duty and intercourse, his name is always moving as a great and living force. First in time of the two mighty men of God who successively occupied of later years the chair of Durham, and who made between them a continuity of combined mental and spiritual greatness to which it is difficult to find a parallel, Lightfoot still retains in the hearts of both clergy and people a place not of honour only but of love with which not even the splendour of Westcott's venerated and more recent memory interferes. "Dear Bishop Lightfoot" is his common designation in the faithful-hearted North; and men recall his grand humanity, with its gladness and its tears, even more vividly than his immense knowledge, his masterly administration, his supreme sanity of judgment, and his literally life-breaking toil. Then, behind his great episcopate lie the times of his epoch-making activity as student and

teacher, at Cambridge and St. Paul's. Within those years, from 1861 to 1879, step by step, work by work, as expositor, as historian, as consummate defender of the historical faith, he grew to be a power for good in Christian minds and souls, unsurpassed, if not unrivalled, for its magnificent wholeness and soundness of result. In a leading article issued just after his death, the *Times* paid a noble tribute to the astonishing achievement of his literary labours in giving a new trend of thought, a trend towards faith, over vast regions of the educated world. The panegyric, for such it is throughout without reserve, dwells upon the "noble character and splendid faculties" which somehow, and not least, I think, by his perfect combination of wisdom with knowledge, and of modesty with authoritative power, so found response in the public estimate that (in the words of the writer of the article) "his virtues were never doubted, his mental eminence depreciated, or the appropriate rewards withheld."

But to-night I speak of Lightfoot less as

the great Bishop and the great Professor than as the Fellow and Tutor of this College, under whom it was my happiness to enter seven-and-forty years ago. Only for one year did we enjoy his guidance, for in 1861 he succeeded to the Hulsean chair; but that short year laid an influence for life upon mind and aims. And how did the influence operate? By no means in any overt and elaborated fashion. To all but an intimate few of our time Lightfoot was reserved in individual intercourse; the shy pupil never found it easy to open a consultation with the shyness of the Tutor. We benefited greatly in scholarship by his fine lecturing, particularly by his evening readings in his rooms on the Æschylean Trilogy. Now and then he spared time for an hour of invaluable private criticism upon classical work. His sermons, happily not infrequent, were always uplifting by their strength of reason, their freshness of insight and application, and an eloquence only less of form than of the soul. But his power upon us was mainly and continually exercised

through the manifestation of what he was. To watch his simple but profound devotion day by day in this Chapel, to see a little of his splendid diligence in toil and duty (for who ever lingered so late at night in the Great Court that he did not see Lightfoot's lamp still burning, and who ever missed him at the matin-prayers at seven?) to know by a sure instinct, as we talked about him, or heard rumours of him, that he was always and everywhere the same, the Christian man using very great gifts wholly for God and for others; all this meant for us a perpetual moral impression of the sort to tell, just at our time of life, for the purest and most lasting good. Well may his memory by us be blessed for ever.

We could not possibly at that period know anything in detail of the secret inspiration which made such a life possible, as our Tutor lived his daily and his nightly life in the rooms where Newton had thought and worked before him. But I have come since to know a little of his sources of patience and of power,

and how they were hidden with Christ in God. His near friend of the latest years, Dr. Watkins, Canon and Archdeacon of Durham, possesses an engraving of Dürer's "Crucifixion" which always hung beside Lightfoot's simple bedstead at Auckland, brought, I believe, from his Cambridge rooms. Below the picture runs the legend, ES IST VOLLBRACHT, the "IT IS FINISHED" of the Crucified. To my dear Tutor, deep within the heart of his most noble life, the incarnate Christ of Atonement and Resurrection was all in all—salvation, desire, motive, resource, life, way and end. The magnetism of his influence upon us rose ultimately, behind all the massive complex of gifts and acquirements, from HIM who dwelt in his heart by faith.

I have done with this brief tribute to the memory of the "wise men and scribes," and particularly of this most wise man and most true scribe of the heavenly kingdom, to whom I am so much a debtor since those good days of old. I leave them standing in my view

upon the scene of recollecting thought somewhat as Virgil's hero saw grouped together, amidst the bowers of odorous laurel, beside the brimming river of the Happy Fields, the white-tired shades of the departed just. There was the patriot warrior, wearing the scars of his devotion; there the stainless priest, found faithful to the last; the poet, true and good, whose song was worthy of his Inspirer; the inventive helper of human life in its development; the man who by whatever merit had left his memory green. The names of which I have essayed to speak are green indeed and living, and pregnant of fruitful intimations of the opportunity for service and for the winning of grateful recollection which this wonderful place sets before the successive generations of its leaders. Those leaders of long ago I greet again with hail and farewell, and also with *Wiedersehen*, thinking of them as the denizens now not of a pale Elysium, void of a living Presence and of a holy Throne, but of the Paradise where they rest with

Christ, and from whence they shall be brought again with Him.

POSTSCRIPT

"Since it hath pleased Thee, O Lord, that I should be called to take my part in the teaching of this College . . . grant that neither by word or deed I may do aught that may weaken the faith or slacken the practice of those committed to my charge; but rather grant me such a measure of Thy Holy Spirit that my duties may be discharged to Thy honour and glory, and to the welfare of both the teacher and the taught."—*From a Prayer by J. B. Lightfoot upon his entering on the Tutorship*, 1857.

IX

CHRIST IN SCHOOL LIFE

Preached in the Chapel of Sherborne School, Midsummer 1907.

"Lo, I am with you alway."—ST. MATT. xxviii. 20.

IT is a heart-moving thing to find myself here as your preacher to-day. It moves an old schoolmaster to take part once more after a very long time in the commemorative worship of a distinguished school; it lifts him back over exactly forty years to the close of a happy and, to him, most fruitful time of service at Marlborough College, a time which shines only greener and more sunny to the eye of memory as life, with its joys, its griefs, and its duties, deepens insight. It moves a Bishop of Durham, to think of the links which bind Sherborne to the primeval diocese of the north; your Head Master,[1] my greatly honoured friend,

[1] The Rev. Canon Westcott.

and my predecessor, his most illustrious father, knit for me a living bond indeed between the bishopric and the school. And then my heart is stirred as I think that I stand here within the dear county of my birth, where my father, for fifty-five laborious years, fifty-one of them in our well-beloved Fordington, equally devoted to the Gospel of his Lord and to the well-being, spiritual and physical, of his fellow-men, ministered, hopeful and unwearied, from youth up to his eightieth year, yes, even when he lay on the bed of his brief last illness. To me the very name of Dorset speaks as it can speak only to the heart of her child. I love her very dust. Her shores and downs, her water-meadows, and her woodlands, and her heathery wilds, her towns and villages, above all her sons and daughters, are treasures of my heart. "For my brethren and companions' sake I wish her prosperity." Her noble Tudor school may well claim my loyal love and honour. Let it flourish evermore under the blessing

of Heaven. Let it bear always larger fruit for the good of the generations, even to the end of days.

"*Lo, I am with you alway.*" For you at Sherborne to-day I have sought a message from my Master, and I think He has given me this. The words are His own, and even amidst His words they shine eminently out, as they crown His commission to His Church to carry to all the nations the name and grace of His redemption. And they glorify the commission with the promise, infinitely precious, of His personal and perpetual presence, and couch the promise in a shape suggestive of His own eternity. "*Lo, I am with you alway.*" For He says not, "I will be," but, "I am."

Before we approach the text more directly for its message, pause with me a moment over the exact wording and rendering of its Greek. A point of grammar can carry to us sometimes the very message of the Spirit. A tense, a case, a preposition, just because

they are, in their measure, registers of the lightning-play of thought, may make all the difference to the force and fulness of a Scripture sentence. So it is in the text. The Greek of St. Matthew gives us here particular and precious treasures as we scrutinize it afresh. It runs, precisely, "I am with you (not '*alway*,' but) *all the days*." And I do not think that I refine too much when I say that the original of "all the days," by the extending power of the accusatives, πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας, may justify the paraphrase, "I am with you all the days, *and all day long*."

Such is the promise of the Lord Christ. It is exactly like Himself. It is like Him, first, because of its sublime, unhesitating self-assertion. Nothing is more wonderful about Him than that He, kind and tender, meek and lowly, the mourner's Comforter, the little child's devoted Friend, stooping in His love to the depth, and beneath the depth, of our sorrows and our death, yet never for one moment depreciates Himself. To Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is His own unfathom-

able Gospel. "Come unto Me; I am the Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life; I am the Shepherd and the Door, I am the Master and the Lord; I AM." He speaks and acts always as with an absolute certainty that to the salvation of the world, and of the soul, to the whole depth and range of human need—its sin and its sorrow, its perplexity, its death—He is necessary and He is adequate. Such precisely is His attitude here. He sends His disciples out, a few hundreds as they were then, at the most, to the spiritual conquest of the world. Can they possibly achieve it? Is it not a case of madness? It would assuredly be so, if it were not a case of Deity. But that is just what it is. The speaker is God made Man; and He promises to the enterprise nothing less than Himself, everywhere, in person. "Lo, I am with you—all the days, and all day long."

My friends, my sons, I ask you to-day, in all the force and glory of your youth, amidst that noble environment and setting of your youth, a great English school, in

the stress and generous strife of your mental and physical *palæstra*, in all that makes a sunrise and a morning around you, along with all the dreams and ideals that visit, and should visit, your head and your heart, as you look into the future and think what you shall be and do—I call upon you to turn your whole thought here afresh upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Listen to this imperial Prince and Leader, who is so absolutely sure of Himself, and then, with hearts open and unreserving, make sure for yourselves of Him. In religion, as you live, and learn, and think, you are certain to find mysteries unfathomable, problems anxious and distressing, seeming contradictions, as truths cross each other this way and that, which may threaten even to shake down your faith. All the more I entreat you to seek, to find, to embrace, to know *something* in religion which cannot be shaken; and then put in practice over it that pregnant maxim which enjoins us never to let what we do not know disturb us in what

we know. And I affirm that our Lord Jesus Christ is such a matter of knowledge. The Christ of the Bible, and of the Creed, and of the *Te Deum*, and of the soul, is a supreme certainty which you can know as such, and around which, and so around you, as you rest on Him and live by Him, the billows of the unknown will heave and beat for you in vain. I affirm that you may be certain in your reason that the Christ of the Gospels is fact; for it is certain in historical reason that the Gospel portrait of the Christ could not possibly have been generated or developed out of the consciousness of the Evangelists, or of their age, or of the next age, or of the next. And I affirm that that certainty of the reason can be met and made perfect by a certainty from profounder depths. The human soul that has come to know itself, its sin, its wants, its hunger and thirst, its true ideal, and then comes to look with worshipping desires towards Christ, finds Christ, in self-evidencing justness, the key to fit its lock, and thus *knows* Him with a know-

ledge as unshakable as our certainty of ourselves. And to know Him, what is it in its issues? It is the life eternal. It is heaven poured out into the necessities of time.

But then further, these words of our Lord are just like Him because what they promise is His personal presence with His followers. Observe the strength of the phrase He uses. It is not only that He will protect them, that He will look down on them from the skies and sympathize with their strifes and pains, nor even that He will direct their campaign from thence, as a military commander may post himself on a hill-top to watch and manage his soldiers as they do battle upon the plain. Jesus says, "I am with you, all the days." He is to be not commander-in-chief alone, but comrade- and companion-in-chief besides. His "presence shall go with them." He "will hide them in the secret of His presence." He will be so close to them that at every moment they shall be able to use Him as their inexhaustible resource, as their all-sufficient Friend, as their

strength, and victory, and song. And this is just like the Lord Jesus Christ, because at every turn in the Gospel story you see Him as the Leader who not only leads but also positively delights in the company of His followers. *He likes* to have them closely and continually about Him. In the glory of the Transfiguration, in the blackness of the Agony, He wants them, He must have them near Him. He rises from the dead in the power of an endless life—and instantaneously He returns into company with the men and women whom He has loved; the whole Resurrection Day is spent with them, in the Garden, on the open road, in the upper room when the night has fallen. *He haunts* them through the Forty Days, week after week, in His new and wonderful life, till at last He ascends indeed out of their sight, but with a final positive promise to return in visible glory, and undertaking meanwhile to be with them all the days and all day long, in a mysterious unseen companionship, as intimate as possible, even to the end.

Not now and then, as exceptional periods may emerge, but all the days. Not as unusual moments may chance to demand it, but all day long.

Such is the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ towards us. We are entirely unworthy of Him; we are ignorant, we are far more sinful than we know, we are indeed a contrast to His pure glory. Yet such is His heart. "His delights are with the sons of men;" He likes our neighbourhood. "Is it possible that you not only love me, mother, but like me?" said a deep-hearted child, looking up from the sick bed to the yearning eyes above her. You feel, you understand, the accent of nature in the words. Well, I dare to say that the all-generous heart of the Lord Jesus not only loves but likes us. He tremendously mislikes our sin, be it the sin of the most silent and as it were motionless thought. But "He hath a desire to the work of His hands." As Creator of our nature, as Redeemer of our souls, He takes pleasure in us. There is no surer index of a perfect

affection than the desire and purpose of perpetual company. And He says, "I am with you, all the days and all day long."

Now it is just this aspect of the text that I lay upon your hearts, my sons, to be a light, please God, for your whole lives for ever. I wish for you all the pure temporal happiness which the wise benignity of God can give you. I wish that you may, every one of you, grow, with a nobly healthful growth, in vigour and energy of limb, in masculine skill of exercise and athletic play, and yet more, of course, in the athletics of the immortal reason, in everything which intellectual nerve and muscle can be trained to, to attempt and to achieve. May you prosper in the pleasures as well as in the duties of the mind, in the ennobling love of nature, and of literature, for its own sake, and of art; gathering up faculties and resources which even till the end shall endow your existence with a wealth which need never be taken from it by chance and change. And I pray that all the pure delights of home-

affection may be mercifully preserved to you, far, far onward amidst the dangers of this life of uncertainty and loss. But besides such things, and above them, and beneath them, and deep within them all, I pray that your life may be Christian. That is to say, I pray that by the grace of the Spirit of God you may, every one of you, recognize and remember that you, your whole selves, belong to Him who "gave Himself for you to redeem you from all iniquity"; and that you may aim with your whole will to be true to the recollection. For that, and nothing less than that, is the Christian life. The Christian life—what is it at its heart? It is to know that we belong to the Christ of God, and to live that condition out.

That "living out," if it is to be in the least degree a reality, and not a poor figure of superficial speech, must be a matter of all the days and all day long. Christian conduct is not a best suit for exceptional occasions. Rather it is the living skin of the living limbs of personal being, part of our very

selves, impossible anywhere to be left behind. It must be yours for Monday as much as for Sunday, for the home, for the form, for the playing-fields, as much as for the house of God, for the common meal-time as well as for the Table of our Lord, for day and for night, for company and for solitude, for your reading, thinking, and imagining, for your tears and also for your laughter, for your honest pleasures as well as for your sorrows and your dangers. For godliness (let me return to the thought) is not the costume of character, nor its attitude; it is the character itself, whatever seemly costume it may wear at any time, and whatever attitude may be demanded by the changing scenes of action.

How shall it be lived? Who is sufficient for such a life? The answer, as I take it, is given us here, direct and clear: He is sufficient, be he man or boy, who uses his Lord as a living Presence all the days and all day long. There are a hundred things to be said in their place about the sacred, the Divine accessories and helps of the Christian

life; about Prayer, Bible, Sacrament; about the society and fellowship of the Church. And well must we remember the supreme necessity that the Spirit of God should teach us how to use the Son of God. But then, at the heart of the matter, just *that* is the secret—to use the ever-present Christ; to take Him for our own, as air, as light, as company, as power, all the days and all day long. It is "the Practice of the Presence" that lasts and wins. Use the Presence when the dark power whispers that sin is sweet. "I remember," said a friend of mine, recalling his splendid youth, and its temptations and deliverances in the moral struggle, "I remember that when sin of that sort assailed me I would shut my eyes, and say deliberately to myself, '*Jesus Christ*,' and the devil fled before Him." Use the Presence against your individual weaknesses; to control and keep your temper, to make true your every word, to keep conscience sanely tender, to raise you to a fine and beautiful modesty, to brace the fibres of the will, to ennoble recreation, to

glorify duty, to drive out, as it were to crowd out, the innermost demon of self-pleasing and self-will.

And then be sure that the present Lord will not only respond to your reliance; He will delight to respond to it. The supernatural shall become wonderfully natural in your life. From boyhood into manhood, from manhood into age, if God so wills, from age into immortality, the Presence shall grow within you, and mould you always as it grows, till the Christian character shall shine at last into the perfect and eternal day, lifted to the faultless "measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ."

X

JOHN NEWTON

Preached in the Parish Church of Olney, Bucks, April 25, 1907, in connexion with the centenary of the death of the Rev. John Newton.

"Whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."
—HEB. xiii. 7.

WE may render the apostolic words rather more exactly, as to their order and their diction, thus:—

"*Of whom, contemplating the issue of their life-walk, imitate the faith.*"

This is an utterance deeply characteristic of the Christian Gospel. That Gospel indeed, as to its heart and life, is altogether summed up in Him of whom, in the very next verse here, we read that "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Christ is all in all for Christianity; nay, Christianity is nothing if it is not Christ. From Christ all

its message radiates, and in Him all its saving power resides, and to Him returns all the glory of its infinitely benignant issues—to Him as the Son of the everlasting Father, God the Son of God, and as the Elder Brother of our sinful race, Man the Son of Man. But then the gracious genius of the Gospel, just because Christ Jesus is the life of its life, because for His sake all that reflects and illustrates Him, and bears connexion with Him, is inestimably precious, is *hospitable* in the highest degree to all human sympathies and all human memories that in any sense touch Him. Accordingly the New Testament runs over with the sanctified "humanism" of a tender, clinging, unforgetting love. Its narratives are full of portraits of the saints, so drawn, with the unconscious art of spiritual fellowship, that they are less portraits than dear presences. And its letters, full of the very loftiest themes, are full also of endearments in every form, including the warmest embraces of memory and of hope—touches which make them on their human side, viewed apart from

their august aspect as the oracles of God, the most *beautiful* reading of the sort which is to be found in literature.

It is all in character then with his creed and his spiritual principle that the apostolic Writer here bids the Hebrews remember their departed guides, and contemplate their life-walk and its issue, and imitate their faith, while he instantly then proceeds to the thought of the Lord, as "the same for ever" in His personal identity, and in His truth, and in His love. The thought of the saints merges itself irresistibly into the thought of Jesus Christ, and the thought of Jesus Christ gives new, vivid and immortal significance and glory to every thought about the saints.

Our gathering here to-day then, my brethren, is abundantly Christian in its spirit and in its sanctions. We are assembled in the house of God, in the temple of Jesus Christ, where "every whit speaketh of His glory"; we are here to worship the Son in the Father, the Father in the Son, with the submission, the thanksgiving, and the adoring affection,

due to the Divine King alone. But we are here also as those who remember His saints, and contemplate their lives and the issues of them, and desire to imitate their faith ; that is to say, to bear ourselves as those to whom Christ is all in all for peace, and holiness, and heaven. We are here upon the anniversary of the death of William Cowper, and in the centenary year of the death of John Newton. We meet in the town and in the church which is for ever associated with their friendship in the Lord, with its joys, its sufferings, and its precious fruits. Place and time accentuate to us every impression left by their "walk of life." And it is well to recollect that the impressions thus accentuated are, as we have seen, what the Gospel would have us cherish, in our Master's name and to His praise.

Of William Cowper I speak to-day only as in passing. His name, so fragrant and so radiant with the charms at once of piety and of genius, equally connoting, to those who know the man, an English virility of thought

and sympathies and a reverence most deep and tender; a delicate and genial humour and a prophet-like power to denounce vice and to magnify virtue, as she is transfigured and crowned with grace; a mysterious illusion of the brain on one tremendous subject and a luminous good sense on every other—that name has been once and again commemorated here; this day of the year may be regarded as the day of Saint William of Olney in a calendar of modern English saints. But it is Newton who, by the circumstance that his centenary falls within this year, is most upon our thoughts just now; and it is in connexion with Newton only that I linger upon Cowper. Yet that connexion is too strong and sacred to be passed over, if only as a memorable factor in Newton's life. For thirteen years, from 1767 to 1780, they lived here side by side, in continual intercourse, sometimes in sunshine, sometimes in the awful gloom within which Newton watched, praying and hoping, over the terrible melancholia of the man he loved, and who loved

him so well in return, and clung to him in his worst darkness as almost to an angel of God. Here in happy days they cared together for the poor, and worked hand in hand, parson and layman, for the souls of the inquiring and believing. Here they planned their Hymn-book, and Cowper, while yet he could, wrote his contribution of sixty-six hymns, many of them now immortal—yet, with all their beauty, scarcely more beautiful, even as to English diction, than the best of Newton's. Here Cowper listened from the now vanished gallery (is it wrong to regret its vanishing?), to his friend's heart-comforting Gospel, even when he dared not take its comfort to himself. Here Newton, in the vicarage-garden, with William Bull of Newport Pagnell and that other William, talked away many a summer hour under the trees, on themes wide as man and high as the promises of God. And so the intimacy grew and ripened year by year, till the removal of Newton to London broke up the abundant intercourse though not the love.

I cannot treat, even passingly, upon that friendship without one brief word of indignant repudiation of the thought, too widely and too easily entertained, that Newton had anything to do with Cowper's malady, that Newton was actually Cowper's "evil genius." Mr. Thomas Wright, whose *Life of Cowper* is an unrivalled storehouse of information on the poet's life, has amply exposed the cruel fallacy, and has made it likely that if Cowper had an evil genius at all, a well-meaning but ill-counselling friend, it was a very different man. But to me, even without such proofs, the antecedent certainty is complete that Newton was an influence wholly, or almost wholly, for Cowper's good. I derive my certainty from Newton's character, as it shines out in his hymns, and in his letters, and in every notice that we have of his personal bearing in intercourse with other men. He was a strong man but essentially a kindly one; almost notorious among his friends in London, in his later days, for his optimistic benevolence, liking to see worth, and promise, and spiritual

life, where others could see none at all; accessible and companionable; always ready for the friendliest conversations, in which often the highest principles and truths came up in the dress of a shrewd and sympathetic humour. It is perfectly true that Newton was a moderate, a very moderate, Calvinist in his theology. But so have been some not only of the holiest but of the wisest sons of the Church, in many generations; and few who know the history of doctrine, and of the tenure and presentation of doctrine, will deny that the system of thought so indicated, held by a man who loves man and loves God, can co-exist with a spirit the very opposite of gloomy. A noble optimism is perfectly consistent with it, at least in the actual workings out of the life of faith and goodness.

It is just possible that Newton did not quite adequately recognize, nor therefore quite actively enough encourage, Cowper's rare literary gift. Perhaps he did not see soon enough that in serious poetical work lay both Cowper's life-call to the service of God

and his best antidote to all delusions. But I should be slow to admit more than a little of even this charge, if it means that Newton looked askance on literature as such. He had too keen an instinct for language and too real an admiration, for example, of the Latin classics. Certainly he never thought that in order to be a consistent Christian a man must cease to love his Virgil and his Horace.

But let me be true to our main theme of contemplation to-day. Let me turn now away from Cowper, away from the noble friendship of Newton and Cowper, and call your thoughts before God simply to this John Newton by himself.

The most meagre outline of his eighty-two years is all that is either possible or befitting here. He was born in 1725, the son of a sea-faring father, who had been educated at a Jesuit College, and who died, in 1750, Governor of York Factory, Hudson's Bay. John's mother, a saintly Dissenter, lived devotedly for her only son, and for his temporal and eternal good. To his

grievous loss she died when he was seven; but who can doubt that by her prayers she was the true Monnica of this homely Augustine? He was unhappy at school, and developed a dark, rebellious temper. Sent to sea, under rough conditions, he made voyage upon voyage. At one time he was forced by the press-gang into the Navy, where he was soon promoted to midshipman, but soon again disgraced for insubordination. The pervading scepticism of the day early got hold of him, and his own deliberate and lifelong witness against himself was that, while never lustful, he became by rapid degrees flagrantly profane, and, not without compunctions now and then, habitually godless. One strange episode was his service under a West African slave-dealer, and his reduction in the course of it, through his own recklessness, to be practically the slave of a planter and his black paramour in an island off Sierra Leone. Later, again at sea, a terrific tropical storm alarmed his soul. He opened a copy of

À Kempis and it made him think that things eternal might after all be facts. He began to read his Bible, and to pray, and slowly the light of Christ broke and broadened upon his spirit.

All this while one merciful anchor had held John Newton from final self-abandonment; it was a pure and passionate early attachment to a true woman, Mary Catlett, who returned his love. His stern father at last consented to the union, upon the visible reformation of his son. And means of livelihood were found in the paradoxical shape of the command of a slave-ship. For four years (1750–1754) they so subsisted, she on land, he at sea—as kind as he could be to his human cargo, and as yet untroubled, like most men of his time, by doubts of the lawfulness of his occupation; spending every spare hour in study—of the Bible, of theology, of Latin, all to excellent purpose; slowly but steadily maturing the thoughts and habits of a true, upright, dutiful Christian man, and beginning to long

for opportunity to convey to others what he knew; in fact, to be a minister of Christ.

He left the sea in 1754 for the post of tide-surveyor in the port of Liverpool, and there, more effectually than ever, pursued every sort of study which bore on the now definitely hoped-for life of ordination. In 1764, after many refusals elsewhere, he found the Bishop of Lincoln wisely willing to ordain the ex-seaman to a curacy in his diocese, the then vast diocese which reached down from the Humber to the Thames. And the cure he was to serve, as substitute for an absentee Vicar, was Olney.

Sixteen years did Newton live and labour here. Many of the great Church evangelists of that wonderful day, when a mighty life began to stir beneath the surface of English religion, or irreligion, were nothing if not itinerants, venturing (at the call, as they believed, of a tremendous need, and I think they had reason for their belief) beyond all parochial bounds. But Newton—strange phenomenon, in view of his earlier

years—became and remained the settled, orderly, methodical *pastor in parochiâ*, all along from 1764 at Olney to 1807, when he fell asleep, at eighty-two, rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, hard by the Bank of England. The rebellious forces of his unregenerate youth, seized, tempered, harmonized by the grace of God, had taken a new direction in the form of a persistent diligence, an unpretentious courage in face of opposition or contempt, and a never-dying glow of love for the souls of men.

To be sure, he lived in another age than ours. To him the Christian ministry did not mean one long struggle to compass several lives in one, to hurry from service to service, from address to sermon, from round of visiting to committee, to institute, to club. It meant rather, in that far-off time, the dangerous possibility of living a life lamentably easy and self-pleasing. But for a Newton those liberties only made, day by day and week by week, one long occasion for a measured while unresting diligence, as

teacher, as visitor, and as the always accessible private friend and counsellor for Christ. They made also frequent opportunity for richly fruitful labour with the pen, not least in a department now almost obsolete, the loving toil of careful, deliberate letter-writing to friends and inquirers of many types.

When the City rectory was given him in 1780, he applied himself with cheerful resolution to the new and not congenial life in London, and the sort of success which he coveted came to him there and remained with him to the last. He attracted the poor at once, and, more gradually, the wealthier people, who in those days still very commonly "lived over their businesses"; he got them to listen to his message by making all the legitimate use possible of his own strangely intimate past experience of many sides of life and character in the world. And around him, or within reach of his letters, were rising up in those memorable days a generation of clergymen, his juniors, some of them by many years, who were

to be of untold significance for English religion in their turn; John Venn, Charles Simeon, Claudius Buchanan, Henry Martyn, along with others rather nearer to his own age, like Richard Cecil and Thomas Scott, who found in his friendship one of the great spiritual helps of their own noble lives of sacred service. To Newton Thomas Scott owed his soul. He had once been an almost avowed Socinian, though in Holy Orders, and Newton's unconquerable patience and kindness in argument, the shining evidence of a Divine Master's power within him, won the strong younger spirit to humility and faith. It is strange and moving to remember that to Scott's treatment of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, in his turn, John Henry Newman attributed his preservation from a loss of fundamental faith.

So Newton lived, loved, taught, and witnessed. He preached his last sermon on October 1806, for a fund in aid of the widows and orphans of Trafalgar. On December 21, 1807, he fell asleep in Jesus. His mortal

part, laid to rest beneath his London church, was, with that of his dear wife, in January 1893, translated to this churchyard. William Jay, of Bath, saw him very near the end; the luminous thought and ready tongue were nearly past their work; but the visitor carried away one inestimable utterance; may the record of it never be forgotten; may our soul be found hereafter with him who spoke it:—

"*My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things—that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Saviour.*"

"Of whom, contemplating the issue of his life-walk, let us imitate the faith," the faith confessed in those last words. My brethren, that great message I would fain leave on your hearts, and on my own, as we close this brief review of a blessed life. Did time and occasion allow we might analyse Newton's personality and its gifts at large, and find in it a singularly interesting study. His was no common mind. He

trained himself amidst the avocations of a sea-captain into a sound scholar, a clear and dignified thinker, and a writer of quite admirable English, above all in his hymns, the best of which are of our very best. To him, as a man of force and leading, we largely owe the inception of some of the truest developments of modern Christian life and work, directly or otherwise. But the supreme interest of John Newton's life to me, and I am persuaded to you also, lies in his preaching, teaching, and living, of the immortal Gospel of the grace of God. To him always the Christ of God, the Christ of Bethlehem and of Calvary, the sacrificed, risen, glorified, present, coming Lord Jesus Christ, was all and in all. To him man was the being whose mighty ideal, whose mysterious fall, whose awful needs, whose glorious potencies, called that Christ from heaven to the grave, and back again from the grave to heaven. And he has left us, as the main legacy of his life, the witness that an infinite import, for time and for the life to come,

lies living and moving in these words: "I remember that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Saviour."

For in those words we have, in just its profoundest elements, the Christian message, authentic, unique, divine. There we have man, involved in a spiritual disorder whose greatness is measured only by the glory for which he was created. And there we have the sublime antithesis and antidote to man's mortal need. Christ fills the vast and sombre sphere of the soul's ill with the effulgence of His grace, His love, Himself; a Saviour great with an immeasurable "pre-eminence in all things," but above all in this, that "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him."

XI

THE POSTPONED CORONATION

Preached in the Chapel of the Foundling Hospital, June 29, 1902.

"While we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen."—2 Cor. iv. 18.

The Apostle is here engaged with a matter of personal experience. He is explaining to his converts, as a true pastor will sometimes care to do, certain secrets of his activity, an activity in itself so exhausting, so wearing, nay, if we may use the word, so lacerating in its course of toils and sufferings, but which finds him nevertheless always ready to go on.

His life might be illustrated by that remarkable scene in the *Pilgrim's Progress* where the Interpreter, in his house of parables, takes the Traveller in to watch the fire which burns on ever brighter under difficulties. There is the glowing hearth, always more alive with flame. Yet in front of it stands one who

continually casts water on the heat, to put it out. Christian is much perplexed. Then his host leads him round behind the wall, and lo! another agent is at work there, pouring through a secret channel oil into the fire. So the paradox is explained.

Thus it was with the Apostle's life, and the forces which threatened hard to bear it down. Behind it, within it, was "the secret of the Lord." The veil of tired and suffering humanity held concealed below it, beating with immortality, the life of Jesus. And while the man felt and handled "the things seen," and sometimes endured and sometimes wonderfully used them, he saw, with the open eyes of the soul, not them but the things unseen, the things eternal, as the true landscape of his life. "For this cause" he did "not faint." "The outward man," he admits, was "perishing." But it did not matter. "The inward man," the pulse of the machine, "was renewing day by day."

I do not dwell now on this immediate import of St. Paul's words, for I have in

view another message which they carry. But let us pause a little here, and recollect that there is such a "secret of the Lord," and that it is for us to-day, if indeed we are His disciples. It is a talisman as potent in the twentieth century as in the first. Now as then the eternal Master claims our whole devotion, in whatever path it is to be shown. Now as then world, flesh, and devil cross that path at every turn, and make the Christian life not only difficult but impossible, if we try to live it of ourselves. But now as then the oil of heaven is ready to run in from behind the wall. "The life of Jesus," the living Lord dwelling in the heart, can still prove inexhaustible, victorious, "in the mortal flesh." The things which are not seen can be still brought within the spirit's sight, and then that which is impossible with man is, in man, found possible with God.

This is no poor plausible theory, fit for a reverie, annihilated by real life. Who has not known examples of it, modern as ourselves? There was the mother, given wholly to every

duty of domestic love, yet also wholly instinct with the unearthly power of her beloved Saviour's presence. There was the friend, alive to every problem of his period, practical and laborious in its service, yet for whom the mastering and empowering passion, elastic with eternal life, was always Jesus Christ. There was that other friend, put to fiery proof in the extremes of pain and weakness, yet still lifted by an unseen embrace above them, calm to the end, and cheerful, and full of thought for others, and all because the Lord was with him and was in him; so he would affirm with indescribable simplicity and joy.

The facts of conquering faith are no antiquarian study. The living specimens of the immortal race are all around us. The life of Jesus and the things unseen are modern as well as ancient, contemporary always, because they are eternal; "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." And for us, for every one of us, it is intended that those forces should be our own. The old baptismal prayer

is a nobly true petition for every real member of Christ without exception; not that we may "walk in a vain shadow" of the Christian life, but that we may have "power and strength to have victory, and may triumph against the devil, the world, and the flesh."

But now I turn to another side of the Apostle's teaching here. We shall look the better in that direction for this view first upward to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

This is a moment of strange weight and impression in our national life. The past few years, the past few weeks, and now the past six days, have been such that we may confidently say that they will abide for ever as large features in our history. The African War, with its long agony and its magnificently abrupt and noble issue into peace; the passing of our blessed Queen from her long and wonderful service of God and man to the eternal rest, herself the setting sun of a splendid period which can never be repeated; these things have drawn a vast demarcation

between the centuries. And now has come a memorable week, bringing the stir and pomp of the coming Coronation, felt in every corner of the imperial State, and vibrating beyond it through the world; when lo! a Will that asks no leave of crown or senate lays its hand upon us, and a Voice from the unseen says, "Be still, and know that I am God," and "stains the pride of all glory," and leaves us praying and watching (in hope, but hope that cannot help its awful tremor) beside a sick bed and a stricken man.

Not many hours in human history have been like this. It is almost as if once again a hand had been reached visibly from heaven, and had written *Mene, Tekel,* upon the walls of our triumph and our pride, and bade us send for the prophet, if we can find him, to tell us in our consternation what the writing has to say.

Thank God, the inscription has not been written, like that dreadful sentence at Babylon, over a scene of impious revelry, a pagan carnival. We were on the eve of a Corona-

tion whose whole ritual is an act of worship at the steps of the eternal throne. We were about to acclaim a king who would own, as he took the cross-crowned orb, that "the whole world is subject to the power and empire of our Lord Jesus Christ," the Crucified. And I dare hope that never would that service, in all our long history, have been celebrated with a graver and more developed sense of the awful realities put before us in its words and order, with more true worship, and with more heart-felt prayer.

Yet who did not feel, when that sudden halt was called two days before the Coronation, that there was a stern fitness in it? Was there no cause why Heaven should break in upon a too mundane and materialistic jubilation, and call us to repent?

We have been moving fast and far in our national life into conditions which cannot possibly be pleasing to the God who has indeed been good to England. True, the land contains, in His mercy, many righteous. True, we find at an hour like this that under

a dreary surface of indifference there lives amongst us still an instinct towards prayer. The activities of Church life are innumerable, sometimes almost to bewilderment. Yet on the other hand there is an ominous decline in habits of common piety. Public worship, certainly in any fulness, is no longer the custom that it was. The hearing of God's Word, by multitudes even of church-goers, is cast aside as a weariness and given up. Family worship, vital to the true godliness of a people, seems to be tending to extinction. The Holy Day is profaned on an enormous scale, without thought, without scruple, without shame, as if it were an antiquated bondage instead of a Divine gift immeasurably important to the moral health and fibre of personal and common life. Wealth is worshipped here, and envied there, with a blind intensity as bad as that of decadent paganism. And dark things are said, by some who seem to know, about a decay, a mortification, of virtue amidst our material and æsthetic splendour, yea, in England's great city in its social glory, which

only a decadent paganism could match. With it all, along with a melancholy silence or hesitancy about a hope beyond the grave, a presumptuous confidence about the earthly to-morrow seems to be in the fashion; the whole modern temper repudiates the reverence which would say, "If the Lord will."

It is just in season and in point, if this is so, that Almighty God has silently decreed the putting-off of the Coronation. He would have us not forget. He would tell us, in a way that must be listened to, even in this century, that we are not "masters of our own destiny," to use that worse than heathen phrase. He is God. We no more know what will be on the morrow than they did before the Flood. The world is not one whit less frail now than then. Physically, as Martinique has reminded us, with its fierce eruption, it is still suspended over vaults of fire. Our dear King Edward's sudden sickness tells us that human forecasts are still no more certain than the delicate play of forces in these mortal bodies; no more to be relied on

for a single day than when the first dying man sank down in the new mystery of dissolution.

What does it all mean, this supreme *Veto*, which has made such a hush amongst us?

My friends, it does not mean that God despises human life, its sorrows or its joys, its labours, its poor broken hopes, its circumstances and scenes. Not for a moment does it say that the life of England, of London, of king, of people, is nothing in His sight—a phantom, a dream, a show, a sport. No; our Lord and Redeemer, who died and rose again, thinks of nothing lightly. He is still "the Prince of the kings of the earth," and He cares for His Empire. "The powers that be" are still "ordained of Him," and He respects His institution. They are "God's ministers," and He does not forget His servants. Time is immeasurably important to the King Eternal. "He humbleth Himself" with an infinite sympathy "to behold the things that are in earth," not forgetting the sparrow in the streets of

the city, and certainly not forgetting the man.

But He means to rebuke the awful fallacy which would throw earth and time out of solemn relation to eternity and to heaven. The supreme importance of the present is rooted in the future. This life is worth incalculably much as the school and discipline for the life to come; otherwise, it is much worse than nothing. Man, related aright to God, is only not Divine. He is the most tragical of all failures, the "jest and riddle of the world" indeed, if he is not learning alike from life and death to live to God. We are not right for to-day if we are not spending it as those who remember, in faith and fear, that only God possesses to-morrow, and us in it.

It has been well said of late, in a remarkable book, *The Fact of Christ*, that this world is a most unsuitable world for worldliness, but is adapted with absolute perfection for the formation of character. Not one solitary human hope, centred here,

can be guaranteed against prompt collapse. Not one tree in all the forest of human life but is marked for coming down. But then, not one human experience, pleasant or gloomy, rightly related to God, but can help in the building of the being which shall, through His great grace, enjoy Him for ever and serve Him day and night in His temple. The educative circumstance endureth for a moment, light and fragile. But it is to live for ever in its strong results. It "worketh out" a coming glory, weighty with the gold of heaven, for the soul which has fled from sin and from change to Jesus Christ, the Lord of to-day and of to-morrow, the Master at once of eternity and time.

We will all alike, God helping, carry this moral of the Postponement home. We are, individually, immortal sojourners in this life; our permanent residence is in the other. So, each for himself, we will let in upon the present hour "the powers of the world to come." We will deal, each for himself, with our unseen King, who claims first our ab-

solute homage, that then, and not till then, He may give us His wonderful and most gracious friendship.

So, each for himself, we shall find the common day ennobled, transfigured, and our eyes will be prepared to open soon upon "the things not seen as yet."

XII

THE BLESSING OF THE NETS

Preached in the Parish Church, Great Yarmouth, September 1907, on the Sunday before the session of the Church Congress, being also the Sunday of the annual Blessing of the Nets.

"Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord."—JOHN xxi. 7.

THIS was said, as you remember, on that memorable morning when, near the shore of the Galilean lake, after the long night of fruitless toil upon the deep, the seven disciples suddenly found their net heavy with a great capture. Hour after hour they had cast and hauled in vain; now the fish came their way, and the net secured the treasure, and upon the soul of John it flashed on a sudden that the success was due to the will and power of yonder Watcher from the shore, and that the Watcher was the Lord.

The Lord had blessed the nets. And now

they could not draw them for the multitude of fishes.

You will at once see the fitness of a recollection of that incident at our service to-night in this ancient and magnificent church. Two great interests are upon us here together this September evening. One is the annual Blessing of the Nets before the fishermen of Yarmouth set out to reap the harvest of the sea. The other is the Congress of the Church of England which is in the act of opening in this town, and to which this town is preparing to give a welcome of exceptional and generous warmth.

The Blessing of the Nets connects itself obviously with the miracle of the Lake of Galilee. I think we shall soon see that strong and living links lie between that miracle and the meeting of the Congress also. But let us speak first a little of the Blessing of the Nets.

Moving indeed to the heart is this old and simple ceremonial of Yarmouth Church. Did not every worshipper just now feel it to be so? Did we not all realize in some genuine measure

how this tranquil act of benediction, within the house of God, in the quiet light of the evening lamps, made at once a harmony and a contrast with far other scenes soon to follow —hours to be spent upon the heaving, perhaps the stormy, waters, when brave hearts and thoughtful hearts (for those who go down to the sea learn often a deep thoughtfulness there) shall recall the Hymn, and the Collects, and the Blessing, in darkness, in danger, in stress and toil, and shall find strength and cheer in the recollection? May it be largely and truly so, in the fisherman's boat, and in the fisherman's home, this autumn. And may we who have prayed thus for him and his, follow up our prayers by a fresh grasp on the reality of prayer, that we may pray on the better.

Why, in the last resort, have we thus besought the unseen and almighty Hand to rule the winds and waters, and the harvest of the waters, for our brethren's benefit? Supremely, because the express command to pray, and to pray for daily food as one matter of our petitions, has been given us by our

Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He whose victory over death set the great seal of heaven on His every word, does not indeed explain to us the mystery of prayer, but He assures us of its reality. On his word of honour we know that our petitions are addressed, not to the empty air, but to living and eternal love, able to answer and to bless.

And then, if we care to reflect upon this also, we may confidently say that a subsidiary help to our assurance of the rightfulness and the potency of prayer, of prayer such as this for God's action upon Nature, is given to us even by the advances of our knowledge in the fields of matter and its mysteries. A generation ago scientific discovery seemed to many anxious Christian minds to threaten to imprison our minds and hopes within a rigid and mechanical theory of things. But thought has had many a fresh suggestion since then from scientific exploration. And if I do not mistake, the last and most subtle observations on the phenomena of matter have carried us far towards the sight, as it were, of the mysterious

region where, if I may put it so, matter is felt to rest ultimately for its being and its powers upon spirit, upon original and originating mind and will. And the Christian revelation meets this revelation of the ultimate nature of material being by adding to it the fact that it rests therefore upon love, for the original and the originating Will is, according to it, that of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Am I wrong in saying that thus the latest views of the nature of material existence take us round to the back of it, so to speak, in a way which should largely help us to grasp mentally the rightfulness and power of prayer? He who is thus set before us from the side of science as the immediate Cause and Sustainer of matter can indeed be not only believed but conceived to be infinitely able to wield and mould it after the counsel of His own will, and for the good of the creature whom He made in His own image and for His own glory. Reason joins with faith to assure us that the winds and the

waves, by their very nature, must obey Him. And He has told us that we may tell Him of our need and of our desire, and that our telling is a link in His own ordered process of providential working. So with new confidence and purpose let us pray. Let us ask blessing upon the nets, and upon the hands and hearts that are to use them, as those who know that this is infinitely reasonable and supremely worth the while.

Then also we are on the eve of this great Congress of Christian people, for consultation, discussion, intercourse of every sort, hallowed by solemn repeated acts of worship, with regard to the ways and work of the Church, the needs and problems within the Church and around it, the supreme object of its existence, its organization, and its operations; its message, its commission, its achievements, shortcomings, fears, and hopes. Is there a natural connexion between all this and the Blessing of the Nets? I venture to say, yes; a connexion luminous and full of life. Our Lord Jesus Himself (Matt. xiii. 27) likens "the

Kingdom of God" to "a net cast into the sea." The thought of Him as the great wielder of the net passed early into the language of the Church. One of the most ancient of Christian hymns, written by Clement of Alexandria, about the year 200, addresses the Lord under that character—

> "All praise to Thy Name,
> True Fisher supreme
> Of souls for salvation
> In life's ocean-stream."

And assuredly the image of the net and its meshes, strong while flexible and mobile, manifold yet one, lends itself easily and at once to all kinds and sides of the equipment of the Church of Christ. To define the thought, take, for example, just two aspects of that equipment; the Christian Ministry, and Christian Churches built for worship and for the Word of God.

1. The Christian Ministry, as we see it in the particular case of the Church of England. Here are we clergymen. We profess, in all humility, each one of us, to have been

called by Christ to give ourselves to this great type of service, and then to have been visibly commissioned by His Church. And we go out, not haphazard, but distributed to parishes, to districts, to dioceses. Every square mile of England and Wales lies, practically speaking, within some parish, and in every parish resides at least one clergyman, duly settled, to minister Word and Ordinance, to teach, to train, to elevate, to console, to lay himself out to win and as it were capture, if it may be, for full life in Christ and for Him all who will accept such ministry within that parish of his charge. He is there not because its people belong to him, but because he belongs to them; he exists for them; he is their loving servant, placed in a hundred ways in contact with them for their use; linked in countless cases (and may this ever be so in the Church of England) by the blessed charities of a pastoral home, by wife and child, through whom his influence in fine and tender forms reaches the inmost recesses of many a house and

heart. And all this is that he may win and *enmesh* lives and wills for God, for righteousness, for faith, for heaven. Unlike the literal net, he is to be a means of capture not for death, but life, for life eternal. But it is a net-like work none the less. The Ministry is a vast apparatus for such work, everywhere scattered while yet, net-like, it has a strong cohesion within itself. The clergyman is not an isolated unit; he is one of an organic structure; he is linked to a host of fellow-workers by parish, and deanery, and archdeaconry, and diocese, and province, and Church. He is one mesh of a far-spread net in the ocean-stream of human life.

2. Then, again, the House of Worship and of the Word of God. This also is a thing scattered everywhere over the land of our life and love. It has many scales and forms. Here it is the grey-walled church of the old country village, or the white, massive mountain chapel, or the brick structure of the new district. There it is the statelier temple of the town, like this vast and monumental

Church of Great Yarmouth; or, again, one of the cathedrals which rival one another over the dioceses of England in their varieties of majestic beauty. Great or very small, these sacred buildings are alike in this that they are each and all consecrated wholly to the Christian's God, and are means therefore to the winning, to the capturing of soul and will for Him in a way which goes beyond even their sacred use for acts of public worship and for words of holy teaching and appeal. To enter them is to be appealed to in God's high Name. The law of association makes their silent walls and roofs, their doors and windows, their pulpit and their Table, a power which can call man's spirit upward to the eternal world, and downward to the blissful humility and repose of worship, and inward to conscience and to God.

Yesterday, as I travelled down from my northern home, I spent a quiet hour in the mighty Minster of York. Seated near the western door, I gazed along the solemn heights and spaces of the sublime church

where six years ago I was consecrated, all unworthy, to episcopal service. The autumn glory shone through the colours of the vast windows, and made ladders of Jacob as its rays slanted to the floor. Pillar and arch, in their long perspective eastward, all lifted thought and feeling towards regions solemn and serene. I felt the power of the place. It was to me part of a strong and subtle net of influence capable, through the God-given elements in our nature which we call imagination and emotion, to entangle, as it were, and capture inclination towards high and heavenly things, if only the blessing of the Lord of the place should accompany and use the means.

Well—and that is precisely the point of thought to which I bring our contemplation as we close—even York Minster, so I felt, while it could stir the imagination, quite apart from the presence of a heavenly blessing working with it, could not without that blessing win the soul to a nearness to God in spirit and in truth. Without the

touch of the Holy Ghost upon conscience and will, showing to man himself and his needs, disposing him to the simplicity of penitent faith and of worshipping surrender, the great Church might do no more *to sanctify* than a Greek temple in its silent and forsaken symmetry. And even so, without that touch, alike upon the men who form the meshes of the pastoral net and upon those whom they are sent to win and encircle if they can, the Christian Ministry will do no more to fulfil the purposes of the true "Fisher supreme" than did the cast-nets of Peter and John all through the long, resultless night upon the waters of Gennesareth.

So I call upon you, men and brethren, in this multitudinous congregation, to add to the prayer for blessing which you have breathed over the nets of the North Sea a further prayer, earnest, expectant, resolute, believing, for blessing also on the nets of the Church of our fathers, blessing on her Ministry, on her Churches, on her whole equipment for the work of the Lord in the

winning of souls to Him for the life that now is, and for that which is to come.

Pray for us clergymen that we may be filled with the Holy Ghost for our ministry, for our message, our life, our patience and our toil. Pray that we may live out our Holy Communion, dwelling daily in Christ and Christ in us; that we may have no ambition outside the one desire that Christ may be magnified in us just so as to win men, not to us but to His blessed will. Pray that our Churches, from the rustic sanctuary to the greatest of our old Cathedrals, may be used to the purposes of God, by His preparing the hearts of worshippers and of visitors to respond to the message of the calm and the consecrated glory of the very idea of a House of Prayer. Pray for this great Congress that it may realize its highest ideal, that it may to the utmost avoid all mere loveless strife and barren show of words, and may to the utmost "seek righteousness, seek meekness," coveting above all things the glory and advancement of that "kingdom

which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Pray, and remember the reality and rightfulness of prayer, and therefore expect the answer of grace and peace. Pray not now so much for new enterprises and unfamiliar types of effort as for the power which maketh all things new, to pour itself into the old and sacred order of life and working. And then surely our hearts shall be made glad by successes of the Gospel net which shall be like the visions of them that dream, and we shall be aware of an eternal and most gracious Presence living and moving in us and through us, and shall look with the eyes of quickened faith for the reason, and say, "*It is the Lord.*"

XIII

A MISSIONARY ORDINATION

Preached in the Episcopal Chapel, Auckland Castle, 1906, *at the ordination of the Rev. Montagu H. Beauchamp, M.A., by Letters of Request from the Bishop in Western China.*

"When they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed."—ACTS xiii. 3, 4.

THESE words, as you well remember, belong to that memorable passage in the Acts of the Apostles where we have detailed to us the first great, deliberate, organized missionary movement from a central focus of Christian life. The Church at Antioch had been largely and wonderfully blest. It had developed in numbers and in spiritual force to a degree beyond precedent in any place other than Jerusalem. It was strong with the new and expanding power of that true catholicity by which at length converts from paganism were welcomed, at once, with no Jewish preliminaries, into the very bosom, the very heart,

of the faith and life of the Lord's Body. And now, true to the law of its origin, the Church of Antioch was impelled by a Divine impulse, supernaturally conveyed but congenially received, to pour itself out in evangelization into the outer world. It must have not only its ministers but its missionaries. And for its missionaries it must send out its best and greatest to the regions beyond. "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereto I have called them."

Did the saints of Antioch grudge the sacrifice? Did they plead that the central hearth so urgently needed more, not less, toil and tendance that the external circles of possible Christendom must wait? No; they were obedient to the heavenly call, and brought the sacrifice at once to the altar. They prayed, and fasted, and sent their two beloved leaders away to the West, to begin, with a wonderful new departure, the evangelization of the world.

Can we doubt that their obedience and surrender had its reward? When in due time the missionaries returned, as they did, and

recounted what God had done by them in Cyprus, and in the highlands of Asia Minor, was not the spiritual life of Antioch powerfully reinforced by the electric virtue of the consciousness of the Gospel's triumph in countries other than their own? Yes, beyond a question, so it was, and so it is. In our own day it is always true that the Church which in faith and prayer, even at a heavy sacrifice, sends out its messengers of light and peace to the ends of the earth is sure, in God's mercy, to feel a current of reflex blessing. The home that spares its son for Christ afar off gets new blessing by its own hearth-fire. The parish which really cares, and gives, for the enterprise of Christ in another hemisphere finds somehow that its own works in district, school, and church have a new life rising in them. The diocese, the Church, in their larger circles, feel the like blessings, as they more and more consciously and willingly give, and send, and sacrifice, for the Master's mission to the world for which He died.

These thoughts are in place at our Ordination to-day. In the providence of God I am

called to the privilege of setting apart for the ordered historic ministry a servant of God known to me from very long ago as a dear friend, yes, since old days which are full of some of the most precious memories of my life; and who has laboured for his Lord for twenty years in remotest China, in regions of town and village lying at the distance of months from the coast and the ports. He has been led at length, in the line of Divine will and love, after doing so long the evangelistic work which is open to any and every Christian man, to seek the commission of the deacon and the presbyter and the solemn laying on of hands in the name of the Lord. Never before, that I remember, have I been called on to ordain a Christian man for missionary work direct. And every year of my life as Bishop forces on me more and more the consciousness of our grave, our most serious, need of more labourers of the genuine spiritual sort for the field of Christ at home. But shall I, shall we, therefore grudge this our honoured brother to be ordained here not for Durham but for

China, as if we merely and only sacrificed and surrendered him from ourselves? No, we will be of the mind of the Church at Antioch. We will rejoice to send him forth, and escort him with our prayers, and be confident that it is the Spirit's call. And we will be full of a joyful expectation that somehow his life and labour shall still be in spiritual touch with ours; that we shall be the stronger and more hopeful for work in Durham because we have, in him, a living link with the work of power which so wonderfully our Lord is doing in China in our day.

For he goes back, within no long time, God willing, to a field which is both vast and also full of a glorious hope to those who have eyes to see and hearts to understand. In China, when I was born, there were only six known converts of all missions English and American. In China, six years ago, in the Boxer persecutions, there died gloriously for Christ, on a moderate computation, twenty thousand native Christians; not one of them but might have saved life by denying the blessed Name.

And since that date the advance of the faith there, measured even numerically, has been at a rate which, I venture to think, having regard to Bishop Lightfoot's careful enquiries as to the rate of the Church's progress in the early Christian centuries, has no parallel on a great scale since the Apostles' time. And this progress for Christ has been made in a nation where national characteristics tend, when the magic of the grace of God has touched them and elevated them towards the true life, to develope into a type hardly to be surpassed by any Christian race for strength of purpose, and capacity for sacrifice, and completeness of consistency.

So we bid our brother "good luck in the name of the Lord" as he returns to his long-beloved China. When first he went there, in 1885, as one of the memorable "Cambridge Seven," the time was a great crisis of development in the missionary consciousness of English Christendom. Then, as never before, moved deeply by the public testimony to their Lord borne by those young servants of His, who

were manifestly giving up very much for Him, the public mind largely altered its view of Missions; the press, and notably its leader, *The Times*, learnt a totally new tone of respect and sympathy. Yes, those were great days. But we look to Him whose resources are never at an end to send us yet days even greater, at home and in the field abroad. We bid our brother go forth in the hope that he shall see things more wonderful than ever there, and shall hear of prayer, and work, and sacrifice, in support of the great campaign more large and true than ever here.

In closing, I obey the direction of the Prayer Book, which bids the preacher speak, at Ordinations, of the noble usefulness and sacred benefit of the ministerial Office.

I am about to ordain a deacon, a successor in the long historic chain to Stephen and to Philip. He will be set apart to the office which is called indeed as its primary duty to aid the higher ministries in a round of often prosaic and almost secular assistance, but

yet which left a Philip free to evangelize a city and to found, by a conversion in the wilderness, the first of national Churches, the Ethiopian; and which left Stephen free to witness with seraphic fire for Christ and to see Him, in the hour of martyrdom, rise from the throne above to lift him home to heaven.

Is not the office great in these its magnificent first examples? And is it the less spiritual *because it is an office?* Shall we look for the power of the Holy Ghost everywhere except where the old order of the Church comes in? God forbid! Look at the experience of Antioch. The great Missionaries were summoned forth from Antioch by a call from the free and eternal Spirit, it is true; they were sent forth by the Holy Ghost, and departed. But none the less the believing Church had to give them her subordinate mission also, secondary, but sacred. The Spirit called, and led, and filled, and used. The Church prayed, and laid hands on the called ones, and sent them forth, authentic missionaries at once of the Bridegroom and the Bride.

XIV

THE DOOR SET OPEN

An Address delivered before Clerical Supporters of the Church Missionary Society, 1889.

"I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast little strength, and hast kept my word and hast not denied my name."—REV. iii. 8.

THIS is the message of the glorified Lord to the "angel" and the Church of Philadelphia. It contains a promise, and its reasons or conditions. The promise, made by Him who "hath the key of David," is that He will use that key to set open "a door" before the Philadelphian Church; the "door," surely, "of the Word," the "door great and effectual," "the door of faith" (Acts xiv. 27; 1 Cor. xvi. 9; Col. iv. 3). In fact it is a promise of opportunity for testimony and evangelization, a missionary promise. And the conditions are two, each of them calling for the

deepest attention of the missionary Church and the missionary worker now. The first is, "Thou hast little" (not "*a* little") "strength." The second is, "Thou hast kept my word, and not denied my name." Personal weakness, and holy fidelity—such are the conditions.

Why have I chosen these words for our special thoughts before the Lord this morning? In His mercy we are surrounded, in many respects, by suggestions of strength rather than weakness just now in the Church Missionary Society's work. The crowded and cordial gathering at the House yesterday, the vast and manifestly worshipping congregation at St. Bride's, the sermon, full of mental and spiritual force, and now our large clerical assembly here, all speak of resources, of means, of vigour. And presently we shall go to the great Hall, and it is sure to be full of an assembly alive with love and purpose, and we are to hear, as I believe, heart-cheering news of spiritual successes and of a revenue larger than ever, notwith-

standing a year of peculiar trial in the form of severe and persistent criticism from outside. Are all these *Philadelphian* circumstances? Would not my text suit much better some occasion of feeble and tentative endeavour, of great external discouragements, of broken and persecuted Churches and causes?

My brethren, it is for the very reason that we have much external encouragement and resource that I choose as our subject this glorious promise to the weak. Our Society exists to enter where the Lord opens the door; and here He tells us when and to whom He loves to open. So, let our material conditions be what they may, somehow, surely, we must constitute ourselves *Philadelphians* if we would have our desire, if we would see doors opened at the command of Jesus Christ, and so opened as not to be shut again. Let us look again at the words with this thought in our hearts.

"*Thou hast but little strength.*" Can that be said of us, with our large income and cordial supporters? Yes, if we are filled with a

deep and genuine recognition of the uselessness, the weakness, the imbecility, for the purposes of the Lord's work, of all that is not the Lord's but ours. I mean no fanaticism. There are good men at present who favour the adoption of certain missionary methods which are, I think, tinged with fanaticism; advocating, in effect, the abandonment of the use of common means in the great Christian enterprise. To me it seems a sad mistake to say, or to imply, that faith means in the least a real contradiction to good sense. Aye, but do not let this, do not let anything, make us forget that at the heart and centre of the matter there is but *one* condition of success; the abnegation of self, and of its strength, and of its resources, and the simplest submissive faith in our Lord Jesus. Were our income reckoned by millions, "without Him we could do—*nothing*." Resources however vast, where self, where man, instead of Christ, is at the centre, are only, if I may borrow a technical phrase from the Middle Ages, *accidents* without *substance*. But let our

confessed weakness and His strength be at the centre, and it will not be so. Then there shall be open doors to enter, on the inner side of which the largest resources will not be too large for us to "occupy" withal for Him.

And here we may well remember that this connexion of our resources with our dear Lord's strength must and will hallow and elevate all our plans about the gathering and management of those resources. As regards the whole missionary subject, we as His ministers must and will use all our influence to raise the thoughts and aims of our people to the level of His will, of His revealed character, as in this very message to Philadelphia it stands revealed. "These things saith *He that is holy, He that is true,*" ἀληθινός, "real," divinely real. We will remember this when we consult how to awaken interest, or how to raise funds, for His work. We shall remember that not everything in these matters is spiritual which is "spirited"; that not everything "bright" is pure, with the purity

which corresponds to the holiness and the reality of Him with whom alone it lies to put the key of David to the lock, and to open "the door of the Word" to the missionary, and "the door of faith" to the heathen, so that no man can shut it. Earnestly indeed do I appeal to my ministerial brethren on this point. A growing sense of its importance is thankfully to be recognized amongst us, and this is an omen of blessing. But continual watchfulness and prayer, and a wise decision, are always needed in an age of extraordinary social compromise in the Church towards the world.

Then we come to the glorified Lord's second condition for the opened door which no man can shut. It is fidelity *under difficulties* to Him, to His Gospel, to His Name. The difficulties at Philadelphia were very probably those of downright persecution. That is not our case at present. But have we no difficulties? Yes, we have; the difficulties of an age of religious unsettlement, of spiritual languor and relaxation, of other

Gospels which are not Gospels. The watchwords of Sin, of Grace, of Justification, of Holiness, are in no small danger of getting muffled or silenced at the present time.

If we preach the Fall, the world rules that it must not be the severe dogma of "original Sin, the corruption of Man's heart";[1] it must be "a fall upward," an evolutionary crisis in man's development. If we preach Salvation, it must not be conspicuously the atoning Cross, merciful, marvellous, propitiatory; it must be a moral emancipation wrought in man by a better understanding with God, or with Nature; by a better realization of our ideal; by the moral power of Christ's life and pattern. If we preach new Birth and Life, it must be no more than the liberation of "the better self" from the encumbrances and accidental trammels which come of its environment. And we must say but little of an entire and practical surrender to the holy will of a Supreme Person who made us for Himself. As for our Redeemer's

[1] R. Browning: *Gold Hair, A Legend.*

blessed "Name," we must drop out of it, at least for very frequent use, such syllables as "my LORD and my GOD." As for His holy "Word," we must be careful not to identify it with that Book which in *His* opinion was divinely final in authority; for was not His opinion merely a concession to, or a share in, that of His contemporaries, including their popular delusions?

I do not think that we shall find doors largely opened by "the key of David" for the message of modern religious liberalism. I do not think that those messages have the mysterious power to new-make dead souls, and to create saints of God whose conversation is in heaven, who live in this present world looking for that blessed hope, who walk by faith in the Son of God, manifesting His life in their mortal flesh, bearing the cross daily, yet rejoicing with a joy full of glory. Therefore, by the grace of God, we will not in this respect "move with the times." We will, in humble firmness, knowing that we are weak, but strong in Him

who is "this same Jesus," "keep His Word, and not deny His Name." Even so, by Thy mercy, Lord Jesus Christ.

There is a Missionary Church which I always think of when I read this verse. It is the Moravian Church, so called commonly, properly styled the Church of the *Unitas Fratrum.* You know its moving history, its tremendous record of Roman persecution, its wonderful revival out of almost death early in the eighteenth century, and then, at once, its missionary spirit and labours, so that Moravians were suffering, and toiling, and wonderfully reaping, in the West Indies and in Greenland, literally before some of the first fathers of our Society were born. I do not however speak of the Moravians' work now except to remind you that at the present day, out of every sixty European members of the Church, one is an actual missionary among the heathen, and that the total number of native Christians in the Mission stations far exceeds that of the European community. I refer

now to the Moravians only to quote one brief passage from their "Church Litany." For years past I have loved these petitions, and have often used them; for they seem to me to set forth with a wonderful depth, fulness and simplicity what should be the ideal, the desire, and the expectation, of the Missionary Church, the Missionary Society, the Missionary worker, who would look with happy and expectant faith for doors opened by the key of David:—

"From coldness to Thy merits and death;
From error and misunderstanding;
From the loss of our glory in Thee;
From the unhappy desire of becoming great;
From self-complacency;
From untimely projects;
From needless perplexity;
From the influence of the spirit of this world;
From the murdering spirit and devices of Satan;
From hypocrisy and fanaticism;
From the deceitfulness of sin;
From all sin;
"Preserve us, gracious Lord and God."

May such be the continual cry of our hearts, as members of our beloved Society

and workers for it, and as workers for God in any and every way. There shall come to us then assuredly a continual answer, and the Answerer shall set before us, in His own way, His "open door."

XV

THE PRESENCE AND THE MESSAGE

An Address delivered at a Devotional Meeting of Diocesan Bishops, May 1903.

"I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God, and am sent to speak unto thee."—ST. LUKE i. 19.

THIS is a great word among those *Words of the Angels* which shine so radiant from many pages of the Bible; and it was spoken on a great occasion. For Zacharias, if we accept the history here, was privileged to hear the very voice of a messenger of heaven for the first time after a silence of four ages. "The prophets, where were they?" As far distant then in time as Columbus is from us now. But now at length the dumb skies spoke again; the Angel told the priest of the Forerunner and of the Christ.

This is no time to comment upon the

historic texture of the narrative. I for one believe it to be full of self-evidencing truth, even to the ordinary reason; as I was greatly helped to do many years ago by the study of William Mill's book, *The Mythical Interpretation of the Gospels*, a book now sixty years old, called out by Strauss' first appearance in literature, but still full, as it seems to me, of material for to-day.

However, I put that aside here. I take here this reported utterance of the bright Power, as he stood, on a sudden, "at the right side of the altar of incense" just to point a sacred moral, the truth of which is made sure by the whole tenor of the Bible. I take up the words that they may carry to us a message about our personal attitude towards God as bearing upon our influence with men.

1. "*I stand in the presence of God.*" Such is the great Angel's account of his perpetual, his essential place and position. Wherever locally he is sent, to Jerusalem, to Nazareth, to the earth's end, spiritually he is always

there and always *standing* there; in the presence of God. For him always, his atmosphere, his air, his breath of life, his light of life, is the Presence. His mighty and rejoicing being lives and moves, in all its vast and lofty motions, only there. He is for ever what he is by being in the Presence. His unfading happiness, his immaculate purity, his celestial truth and wisdom, his inexhaustible energies and action, in that angel-life of which the Rabbis said that it grows *ever younger* with its endless years—all are conditioned by the Presence. He is strong because he is for ever there, and no cloud comes between him and the face of his King, save the radiant cloud, if we may dare here to apply Isaiah's vision of the Seraphim, of his own wings folded about his adoring countenance, which yet always spiritually sees the Presence and drinks its virtues in.

In that Presence he not only *is;* he *stands* in it. This is the attitude of the reverential attendant, the servant watchful for the signal of the Master's hand. It means the absolute subservience of his otherwise

supremely free and victorious being. It means an everlasting readiness; it means the promptitude of a will kept in perfect order by the eternal influence of the Presence.

"Thy will be done in earth *as it is in heaven.*" In no presumptuous spirit we dare to take this indicated attitude and spiritual location of the Angel and make it the ideal, the working and practical ideal, for ourselves. It is for us surely, brethren and fathers, and in no common degree, to take it so. For we are called, unworthy, to a ministry whose holy speciality is such that assuredly it invites us to covet nothing less, for our very life, than an experience as special as our Lord in His mercy may make it of a real existence in His recollected, in His realized, presence. Our ministerial brethren of other grades are ordained. We are consecrated. I do not want to refine upon the words unduly; they may even suggest technical considerations wholly out of place here, and of little spiritual use. But anywise that word *consecrated* is a word of profound and penetrating import.

Yes, we have given ourselves up to con-

secration. We have submitted ourselves in a devotion, special and apart, to God. And we can approach, even in the faintest measure, that bright ideal of service only on the angelical conditions; standing *in the Presence;* taking that station, night and day, with all the simplicity of the renewed will, for our spiritual locality. We must be found standing in the Presence, "in the secret of the Presence," "in the secret of the Face." And we must be found "*standing*" there. He who has called us to this work has bid us now and henceforth, till the faculty for mortal service fails within us, not sit still in mere contemplation, however blessed, however beautiful, but stand—for errand and for action; "yielding ourselves unto God"; "yielding our members," our framework of faculty, "as implements of righteousness unto Him."

What heart-searching and self-abasement cannot but penetrate the speaker through his own words! But none the less they must be spoken; to himself at the least. For us in our episcopal service, if for any Christian men upon the earth, this is not a mere

counsel of perfection. It is a vital requisite. To live in the Presence; to stand in the Presence; to find our very life in nearness to God; this is our one resource.

As humbly as can possibly be, I call upon this sacred gathering to resolve afresh, here and now, to be content, each and all together, with nothing less than this. For our own souls' sake, and for the Lord's sake, and for the sake of the flock, this place before God shall be ours. "O how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee, which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy Presence from the pride of man, Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."

My brethren and fathers, these words of the holy Psalmist, as Scripture words are wont to do, apply themselves with strange fitness to just our time and our work, with all its manifold antithesis to privacy and repose. The author of Psalm xxxi. contemplates assuredly no cloistered retreat from the realities

of life for "the man of the Presence." He is thinking of a life out in the open, "before the sons of men," in the glare and blaze of common life, in the hard and arid light of importunate publicity. He thinks of an experience familiar with human "pride" and perhaps "plottings" around, and, as he listens the miserable "strife of tongues" is in the air. Aye, but the man has the Presence round him, and he is at peace. And he can come forth to life and yet not leave the secret of the Presence. He can stand in the Presence and yet carry the message to the world. For they who really stand there carry it with them as they go.

2. "*I am sent to speak unto thee.*" Such is the second limb of the Angel's utterance. He has a mission to this aged priest at the incense altar; just as, a few months later, he had a mission, yet more magnificent, to the house of the Maiden at Nazareth. His very existence is for the sake of the messages of God to man. For this he stands in the Presence, and for this he is sent. He is no casual visitant, wandering from heaven. He

is on duty; he is bound to come, and bound to speak. Most surely a deep oneness lies under the two facts, the standing and the mission. Gabriel's capacity as messenger is conditioned by his fidelity as attendant before his King. He brings from the Presence at once a power of love and a power of awe which can be learnt only there.

It is a parable for man. The face that in any true sense sees God and knows Him has eyes that look upon the faces of other men with at once a sympathy and a penetration impossible otherwise to command. The voice which knows how habitually to answer God and converse with Him in the Presence is the sort of voice that will be used by God to find out man's conscience and to minister blessing to his heart.

So, for the sake of our beloved flocks, let us humbly aspire to a life spent more and yet more continuously as by those who are standing in the Presence of God. That we may be more freely and more effectually sent to speak, let us stand in the Presence. For the sake of our dear and honoured

clergy, so ready in countless cases to attend to and follow our fraternal-paternal influence and example, in their lives so full of stress, trial, and temptation, let us stand in the Presence, that we may both speak to them, on occasion, and quicken them also to speak as those who stand there too. For the sake of the congregations who listen to us, that they may hear thê Lord in us, let us stand in the Presence. For the sake of those whom we are called upon to meet and touch in the large intercourse of our general public life, and whose observation of our tone and spirit is inevitably keen, let us stand in the Presence, that we may take it with us into life and be found within it. For the sake of those with whom we have to deal in discipline, in remonstrance, in rebuke, or again in controversy or debate, let us stand in the Presence. And the Presence, that is to say the LORD Himself, known, loved, and followed, will give us in His goodness something of the joy of being His consecrated messengers indeed.

XVI

THE JOY OF ADORATION

An Address delivered at the Church Congress at Barrow-in-Furness, October 1906.

THE great thought of "Adoration" claims our special attention for a time, that we may apprehend anew something of the joy which lies at its heart. No long study of the word appears to be called for, certainly not of the merely philological sort. To a very large degree, in a Christian assembly, for purposes of Christian thought, "adoration" tells its own meaning to the soul. But we may observe, in passing, that the word nowhere occurs in our Authorized Version in the canonical Scriptures and once only in the Apocrypha. By our translators the word "worship" was always used to render *hish-tachvâh* in the Hebrew and προσκυνεῖν in the Greek. On the other hand, invariably, I

think, where worship (as verb or noun) occurs in the English, we find *adorare* or *adoratio* in the Vulgate. We might be tempted to use "worship" accordingly, instead of "adoration," in our title. Yet upon reflection we shall feel that the current usage of the two words is just so far distinguishable as to dissuade the change. Passing from the phenomena of exact scriptural usage to the usage of common modern speech, we feel that "adoration" differs from "worship" as being somewhat narrower in its idea and also somewhat more intense. "Worship" covers the whole range of devotional duty, including its outward order and observances. "Adoration" takes us, as it were, to the heart and sanctuary of worship. It concentrates and lifts the thought, till it is supremely occupied with those relations between the worshipper and the Worshipped which bring the worshipper spiritually to his knees, nay, which bow his face to the earth, and fill his consciousness full of a sense of the greatness and glory of the Worshipped, and of the wor-

shipper's total dependence upon Him. True, all worship involves in its idea, more or less, the call to revere and to submit. But to adoration that attitude is, in effect, its whole idea. The adorer is nowhere if not prostrate and upon holy ground. To adore, in the Christian usage of the word, is to approach the all-blessed God in Christ with that transcendent spiritual admiration which comes of the least glimpse of His perfections; with that profound surrender and submission which sees and embraces His absolute rights over His creature; with the awe which knows that between the adorer and his God there lies, immeasurable and immovable, the *difference* between Absolute and dependent, between Cause and effect, between Potter and clay, between Possessor and possession. Yet it carries in it also a mysterious and magnetic sense of *contact*, in the knowledge that the thing made is in the image of the Maker, that the effect is congruous with the Cause, that the possession is dear to the Possessor, and that the Absolute is, at the least, not *less*

than the dependent existence is, the Bearer of personality, of thought, of will, of love. Thus adoration is the expression of a holy and profound wonder of the soul, of an ultimate and unlimited allegiance to eternal excellence and right, of the giving of the self out and up to be at the will and disposal of its God, of its recognition that He, in the nature of eternal things, is its only reason and secret of existence, absolute and supreme; while yet that mystery, deep in its sacred darkness, pulsates with the gladsome certainty of a kinship, a proximity, a capacity for union and communion, such that God can dwell in man and man in God.

Thus adoration (as its etymology, however accidentally, suggests), along with its tribute of self-surrender to the eternal Holiness, involves also an element of need and asking, an *oratio;* not indeed a mere petitioning for specific gifts and advantages in detail, but that higher and deeper asking, the thirst for God, the inmost sense that "nearness to

God for me is good," the gravitation to an always closer and fuller union with His Son —"that I may know Him"; that I may live my "life in the flesh" as "not I, but Christ dwelling in me."

Adoration is a gem whose facets are spiritual wonder, spiritual surrender, spiritual consciousness of dependence and of difference, spiritual movement of the created being towards its glorious and responsive Source and Centre, so as to enter into a union equally full of awe and of intimate endearment.

This imperfect consideration of the nature of adoration leads us already within sight of some causes of its joy. For if we have read the word at all aright it connotes, in its true idea, not the sort of worship which retires by instinct to a distance from its Object; rather, it is the highest and purest form of an insatiable seeking and approach.

"Rivers to the ocean run,
Nor stay in all their course;
Fire ascending seeks the sun;
Both speed them to their source;

So the soul that's born of God
Pants to view His glorious face;
Upwards tends to His abode,
To rest in His embrace."

Coming more directly to the conditions of the joy of adoration, we may trace some of them as follows, however meagrely and in fragments it is done.

1. To adore, in spirit and in truth, to adore "the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent," tends necessarily to develope joy in the adorer. For it means a motion of the soul towards Him who is the supreme Felicity. That is a wonderful word of the old Apostle's, in 1 Tim. i. 2: "The gospel of the glory of *the blissful* God," τοῦ μακαρίου Θεοῦ. "I sing Thee, Happy One," ὑμνῶ σε, Μάκαρ, is the first line of a fine hymn by Synesius. In His presence, at the deep interior of all clouds, is not only "righteousness and judgment," but also "fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore." And this is necessarily so. For God is Love; and love in its essence is joy—joy in the happiness

of another. Supreme love, within the Triune Life, eternally demands and eternally radiates that joy. And so the being, "drawing nigh to God," tastes, more fully as it draws more near, the power of that supreme bliss which He who breathes it delights, by His nature, to convey and to share.

2. Then further, adoration is the vehicle of joy because it thus approaches the eternal Happiness in a spirit true to its relations with its Object. It is worse than vain to seek the Fountain of supreme joy by the methods of a merely speculative and, so to speak, critical Theism. To collect and focus the intimations of a supreme Mind, indicated through man and nature, is indeed a good thing in its order; but it may arrive at even complete intellectual conviction and yet fail to convey one gleam of joy, if the thinker, the enquirer, is not also the adorer. For then he will be all wrong in his relations with his subject. Man can never be for one moment an enquirer simply; he is a creature made in the image of the Eternal, and he is, of himself, a sinner.

So without adoration he will never sympathize with the supreme Love, and thus with the supreme Bliss. Without prostration he will never understand, in Christ, the mercy and the wonder of the eternal life. But let him adore, and then the heavens will begin to unfold, and the man, contrite, kneeling, surrendered, wondering, shall begin to see "God, his exceeding joy."

3. Thus adoration will open up to believing man the joyful path of his own boundless growth in a true realization of himself. He was made for God; therefore to find Him, and to rest in adoring lowliness before Him, detached from the self-spirit as his centre, is in a wonderful way to find himself.

There is a theory widely spread, in this day of unchastened, uncontrite, unworshipping thought upon religion, a theory which makes God and man ultimately identical; so that man, as it were, is only God in disguise, slowly developing towards a consciousness of his own divinity. Whatever that theory can do, it can never minister to the human spirit

the joy of God. It beclouds the very conception of the transcendent and all-blissful Personality, and so it takes the breath of life out of the instinct of adoration. It may seem to exalt man to the skies, but he will find those skies empty of the joy of the presence there of an eternal Love, which has willed him into being, and is ready now to fill him with a gladness immeasurably higher in its secret than himself. It is only in right relations to that Love that he can for ever be developed upward, in his own creaturehood, to its full joy, in the sense of a perfection always alive with a pure and delightful growth. And that implies adoration, before a God supreme above him, yet unspeakably related to him.

The Holy Scriptures, in their reserved but entrancing intimations of the life to come, make it plain that elements of varied and boundless activity, occupation, service, enter into that life; it will include all the joys of energy and achievement for the immortal nations. But invariably the oracle indicates

that the spirit of the whole life of heaven, the character of it, the binding and ruling principle, felt always in everything, will be the joy of adoration. The glorified are always worshipping, and always singing, in the whole range of the faculties and exercises of their wonderful existence.

But the joy of adoration is not meant by the Gospel to wait for "that world and the resurrection of the dead." Like every other revealed prospect of the life of glory it is to have its preludes and first experiences in the life of grace. Here and now we are meant, in holy diligence, and all the more because we live in an age of deeply impaired spiritual ideals, to practise the sacred habit of adoration, and to open up our being, in deep humility, to its joy; "worshipping by the Spirit of God, rejoicing in Christ Jesus," with what "joy of the Lord which is our strength."

XVII

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE WORK OF WITNESS

An Address delivered at the Church Congress at Great Yarmouth, October 1907.

The possibilities of my theme are great indeed. Anything like a complete treatment is impossible, even in outline. The revealed glory of the Eternal Spirit as the Paraclete, His mission to the world, to the Church, to the soul; here is matter for worshipping enquiry and meditation without limit. The work of witness, the call to the Christian Church collectively, and to its every individual member, to be in some sort a living witness for the Lord, this is a large and incalculably important matter. And then we might dwell upon our present and particular needs in this direction, and touch upon conditions of our day which call pressingly for such witnessing, and which should lead

the Christian to seek earnestly after a new and developed manifestation of the witness-power of the Holy Spirit.

To-day I can only select some sides of so great a topic. God help me to speak upon them to the point, and to aim above all things at practical issues.

1. "The Mission of the Comforter," such is the main heading of this morning's meditations. It leads us straight to the gracious Person of the *Confortator*, the Strengthener; the Paraclete, the Advocate, the *Advocatus*, who is "called to our side" to be our power in the work of witness. I note only here, as we think of Him and His revealed work, and particularly in the light of our Lord's words about Him on the Paschal evening, that He appears as sent in the first place to the world, the mass of fallen humanity, to "convict" it, so that it may desire God, and recognize in Christ His saving health; and in the second place as sent to the Apostles, to the Church, to the believer, to make Christ glorious in the heart, and glorious by

consequence in the issues of the life. This last is His supreme and beloved operation. To prepare for this He convicts the world. And when the world, thus prepared, is approached by a Church, and by a Christian, thus filled for witness by the Spirit, then indeed the bright ideal of the Mission of the Comforter is in the way of realization.

2. "The work of Witness." This is the particular theme set down to me. "*Witness*"; the word suggests thoughts as defined and practical as possible. What notion does it place before us first and most? That of personal knowledge, first-hand acquaintance, direct and immediate sight and hearing, and a declaration of facts based upon such cognizance. The word concerns itself little if at all with other types of utterance and information. It knows nothing of rumours, and conjectures, or even of inferences from sound premisses, if they are only inferences, derived into the mind by its own reasonings. It has to do with what the man has learnt by direct contact with facts; with the person

he knows, the voice he has heard, the act and operation he has seen or felt, the influence which has laid hold of him and lives within him, nearer than his hands and feet.

To illustrate by one great instance. The Apostles were to be, each of them, a witness of the Resurrection of the Lord. It was not enough to be sure of the Resurrection by any amount of inferential evidence, in order to qualify a man to be an Apostle. He must have known the Risen One directly, both before and after He was risen.

The commission of the Lord Jesus to His Apostles, and through them to His believing Church and all its true members always, was that they should be witnesses. Innumerable works in detail gathered round this, but this was the heart of the matter. "Ye shall be witnesses of Me," "ye shall be My witnesses." They were to go into the world not only to proclaim a perfect moral ideal; not only to develope a great community, the Church, created for the world's blessing; no, nor only to propagate the holy record of the Lord's

incarnation, and life, and death, and resurrection, and to set forth the graces and glories which were meant to result from His redemption. They were to go out as witnesses. They were to be able *to say*, "we know." And they were to be able *to shew* that they knew. So were they to speak as to make it plain that they were themselves in living contact with their theme. So were they to live, so to bear themselves in character and conduct, such was to be their tone, sober and heavenly, practical and spiritual, brave and tender, that at the back of the witness of word should lie the witness of work, and at the heart of the witness of work should live the witness of transfigured life, of transfiguring love.

To that work the first disciples went, and they did it, with wonderful results. They said words about the Lord Jesus which manifestly came from the full contact of their own whole being with Him. And they lived lives which made it abundantly clear, to the common conscience, that they were themselves true

results of the fact to which they witnessed, the fact of Christ. And the issue was the living Christian Church, and that deep and incalculable difference which, with all its lamentable shortcomings, the Church has made in the world of man.

3. How did those first witnesses achieve these results? There is only one adequate answer. It was by the Holy Spirit. It was by being "clothed with power from on high." The Holy Ghost took possession of them. He glorified Christ to them, so that Christ became their own complete satisfaction and strength, as He never had been, fully, even when they had kept daily company with Him on earth. The Holy Ghost applied Christ to them. With Christ He met their whole need, mental, moral, spiritual, and so He was to them the Spirit of wisdom, counsel, love, power, persuasion, witness.

He enabled them to approach the world not merely with a warning, an invitation, an ideal, a rule, but above all things with

a witness. "We know Him whom we have believed; come and see."

4. Under conditions immeasurably altered on the surface we, as living members of the Church which the Lord sent into the world, are in face of a work which is unaltered in its depths. The world, the mass of sinful, weak, restless humanity, has at its heart still the need to which Christ alone can be the answer. It would be haunted by that need still, even if to-morrow it were to wake up to find material civilization complete, and every theoretical grievance of social life removed, with a practical equalization of mundane comfort everywhere. For the human heart, because it is created, and also because it is sinful, is restless till it rests in the Christ of God. And assuredly that restlessness is powerfully accentuated to-day in a state of things where sin is everywhere attended and surrounded with grievance and with grief.

The answer to this mighty need can come, effectually, through witness only. It will never really come by theory apart from

witness, no, nor by energy and labour apart from witness, nor by ordinance and message apart from witness. The unspeakable need of the world is a Church which can and does bear living witness to her Lord. And that thought breaks itself up into detail for the individual; the world needs unspeakably the man who says, by word when called upon to speak, by life always, by character, conduct, tone, by the voice of his whole being and bearing, "I know whom I have believed; come and see."

Such witnesses are producible only by the Holy Ghost. The true witness-character is precisely the "fruit of the Spirit" as pictured in Galatians (v. 22, 23). The true witness-utterance is given only by the Spirit of Pentecost. Be it public eloquence, be it quietest conversation, be it a sentence in a letter, be it a grasp of the hand, be it a look of loving truth; the true witness-utterance must have HIM behind it, making the Lord Jesus Christ King within the Christian.

5. Is such witnessing much maintained

in the Church to-day? Thank God, yes, from some points of view. But alas no, a hundred times no, as compared with what might be. Is the Christian Pulpit strong in witness-power? God forbid that I should speak as a judge. But in humbleness and fear I am bound to say that the accent of witness, the indefinable but magnetic tone of the man who preaches a Lord he directly knows, seems to me to be rarer than it was.

Is our ministration of Ordinances strong in witness-power? Too often, I am afraid, worshippers are troubled, in churches of the most opposite types, by a management of worship which cannot possibly suggest the thought that the minister is a living witness to the presence of the Lord. I am very far from advocating a demonstrative and restless naturalism, in the reading-desk, or at the holy Table. And a demonstrative reverence of attitudes is to me, for one, very seriously disturbing. But there is a more excellent way than either. It is taken when the Christian pastor, filled with the gracious

power of the Spirit, carries his Lord so much in his heart while he ministers that the sacred Presence at once sobers and uplifts his whole tone and action.

Is our controversy strong in witness-power? It ought to be so. Controversy there must be, as long as minds differ. But the Christian in controversy must never forget that he is both heard by his brother and overheard by the world. If the Spirit of wisdom, kindness, humbleness of mind, and godly fear, is uniting him with his Lord, his argumentation itself will bear witness, by its tone, to Him. "Our unhappy divisions" will have some prospect of healing when the Spirit really rules our words about them; there is little hope of it till then.

Lastly, in our personal intercourse, we vitally need the Spirit's power for witness. Private opportunities for Christ, direct or indirect, are always coming, but the skill to seize them too often wholly fails us. One only secret can minister to us the needed will and tact. It is the Holy Spirit. Let

Him make our Lord and Saviour to be rest, light, and hope to our own consciousness, and then "the secret of the Presence" will give the Christian a true witness-power with his companion, with his friend.

But the subject must be left here upon our hearts, and upon our prayers. Come, Holy Comforter, and give us in Thy mercy part and lot among the witnesses for Christ.

XVIII

OUR GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO HIM

An Address delivered in the Chapel of Auckland Castle, on the occasion of the Biennial Reunion of the "Sons of the House," June 28, 1907.

"Our gathering together unto Him."—2 THESS. ii. 1.

IT is with mingled gladness and solemnity of feeling that I address the Brotherhood once again. It is the third time during my residence that you assemble, but it is the second time only for myself. Two years ago I was laid low with what might well have been mortal sickness; I could only join my prayers in spirit with yours, and send you a brief dictated message. After that illness, as I discovered later, it was hardly expected that I should ever fully recover into normal strength. Yet, in the Divine mercy, I am here, in health, firm and sound, amongst you. What shall I render to the Lord? May the

answer be, in simplicity and truth, "myself, my soul and body, to be a living sacrifice unto Him," and to be, so far as He shall please, an instrument in some measure for His use in what remains of life.

Let me never forget the untold aid which was given me in my hours of trial through intercessory prayer. Nor let me cease to recollect how, in answer to such intercessions in that time of pain and weakness, precisely at its lowest point, there was vouchsafed to me, a sinner, such a sense (I can call it no less) of the living presence of our Master as to make for my heart an era for all the days to come. Over me and mine at that season another shadow hung. Shall I say that it also has passed away? In one respect it cannot pass; there are bereavements which every hour, "till death us join," make a nameless difference to the bereaved. But in another respect that cloud has passed, and passed for ever, into the dawn of the eternal day. My child and friend is with Christ, where she would be. And "that world and the resurrection of the

dead" are to us, who saw her go, definitely nearer for that thought, and drest now in a radiance fairer than ever because of it. There are departures in which death, according to the word of truth, is for the departing believer so manifestly "abolished" that something of the abolition passes over to the survivors, yea, through the breach of the stricken heart.

But let me not dwell longer, even to this fraternal circle, upon personal shadows and joys. Far rather let me, more gladly and with a deeper sense of fellowship than ever, think of our part and lot in one another, as it is made visible to us again by our re-assembling. How willingly, if I could, would I go out in thought to the life of each individual brother, and try to say something of my, of our, participation in it, as it has been and is being lived out in the work of God. I would fain realize in detail the changes here and there in field and work; the trials of shaken health, the mercy of restorations; the sacred sorrows, the mysteries of loss, hiding in

their cloud the secret of a coming and inexpressible joy; and again the good gifts to one and another of open happiness; home-loves, parochial blessings, the work of the Lord prospered in your hands. I would gladly dilate upon special and conspicuous incidents in life and service; the calls which two here present, certainly, it may be more, have heard from the Lord of the harvest to arise and depart, for He will send them far hence in the missionary ministry. But I must not try to specialize thus. There is only one Heart which can perfectly do this: mine can but assure you of its deepening sense of a brotherhood in Him which carries in it the promise of those immortal intimacies of which Damiani's meditation speaks:

Qui scientem cuncta sciunt quid nescire poterunt?

"Nought from them is hidden, knowing Him to whom all things are known;
All their spirits' deep recesses, sinless, to each other shewn;
All is seen as light within them in the light around the Throne."

So let me rather dwell, this morning, first on the human bond, then on the Divine, which

makes so much of a unity of us amidst all the diversities of our experience, of our fields, and of ourselves.

First then, the human bond. It connects itself indissolubly with this place, which for all of us, with its large and beautiful yet homely dignity, and its long-gathered wealth of associations, has come to be the central hearth of thought and love. And for our great majority this place means, above all things, one (or both) of two great and beloved names. For some of you (I am glad to think for how many to-day) the early years, the morning times, of the Auckland Brotherhood are inexpressibly present. You live again your old genial, earnest, inspiring family-life as it was spent under the roof of this house; you feel yourselves again in converse, varying through the whole compass of mind and heart—from purest laughter to deepest lessons of sanctified and massive learning—with that man so dear to me also from yet earlier days, Joseph, Bishop of Durham, second of the illustrious name. Others, some-

what younger, are realizing and re-living their life at Park Gate House, with its impressions, deep as the soul, printed on their being by the teaching, by the memorable table-talk, above all by the great and unique personality of the saint and sage who, Lightfoot's inmost friend, came here to follow him in a living continuity. That was an episcopal succession without a parallel in our Church history, when we think of the close relations of age between the two men, and of their magnificent rivalry in learning and in vast widths of culture around their learning, and of their fellowship in unshaken faith, and in a joyful loyalty to the English Church, and in an absolute devotion to duty and to man; and when we recall on the other hand the deeply marked differences and contrasts of mental and personal character which made them to so remarkable a degree the complements of each other. Each was great, with a large and wonderful greatness, and who shall adequately say how great was the resultant effect of them, taken together, upon their friends, their disciples, their diocese, their Church, their Christendom?

To me it is one of the great privileges of life to have been, in long-past days, in some sort associated with them both. I was Lightfoot's pupil forty-six years ago in days when we knew him rather as the masterly classical teacher than as the theologian. And later I was resident side by side with both my predecessors at Cambridge when they were the binary star, or binary sun, of our theological school. It is at once the pride and amusement of my memory that one day, some thirty-three years ago, when I was Dean of our College, and they were resident Professors and past Fellows, it was my duty by routine to take the chair at the high-table, and Lightfoot sat on this side of me and Westcott on that, and they discussed, as it chanced, in terms and on lines perfectly characteristic on each hand, the true rendering of 2 Cor. v. 1: ἡ ἐπίγειος οἰκία τοῦ σκήνους. That was a paradoxical presidency, for a man so much their junior. I record it only to accentuate my fraternal part with you in their illustrious memories, say rather in their memory, so in-

separable and harmonious. Yes, the inspiration of what Lightfoot and Westcott were unites us. With them this chapel, the treasure-chest of their earthly tabernacle, is to us beautifully alive. We think afresh how they lived, and thought, and spoke, and loved others, and toiled for them. Ah, how they toiled! Was ever heavenly rest, from the human viewpoint, more truly won? And the thought animates us with an animation which itself is unifying;

> "Within our veins their life-drops be,
> Their spirit in our breath."

Beside their blessed graves, in this temple made by one of them more fair than ever, blest by both of them by their affection for it, and by the example of their worship within it, we realize and re-knit our brotherhood; we go forward afresh to try in our turn to love and serve, till we meet them in the presence of the King, to thank them better there for what they were to us, through His great grace.

But now, by a transition as natural as it is holy, let us pass from the servants to the

Master. Let us think a little while of Him, of Jesus Christ our Lord, as our bond of union in heart, and life, and everlasting hope.

"*Our gathering together unto Him.*" Such was my text, or rather my motto; for you will not dream of my attempting now to discuss the Divine words in their setting, in their primary reference, in their significance in exegesis. I shall not venture here to dwell in the least detail on the supreme and ineffable hope which is their immediate theme, the holy *Parousia*, the Coming, the fulfilment at last and for ever not only of all spoken promises, but of all inchoative accomplishments, when at length in no figurative and symbolic vision we shall see "this same Jesus, in like manner, come again, as He went up." I simply quote the words to collect and focus thoughts which gather round the truth that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Blessed One of Scripture, of Creed, of *Te Deum*, of Church, of Soul, is the central and ultimate magnet of our union. For our brotherhood is of men

who believe in Him, and who are for ever surrendered to His will.

"*Our gathering together unto Him.*" It is that conception, so full of both peace and power, of present rest and of the energy of an immortal hope, so pregnant with the suggestion of a co-operation deeper than we can analyse, but which is ruled and managed by Him—that draws us in ultimate reality together here, and sends us out again, dispersed, yet one in soul.

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"O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesu Christ, O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son

of the Father, who takest away the sins of the world"—behold, we obey Thee, we submit to Thee, by believing boldly and without all doubt in Thy Name, and meeting one anothers' souls in worshipping union there. First-born among many brethren, our inmost brotherhood is in Thee, with each other here, with our absent brethren in their many scenes of service, with the blessed ones gone before us, gone only to Thy other side.

My dear Brethren (how unconventionally that phrase comes from your preacher's lips to-day!), our union, if it has the Christian life within it, must needs be not only deep but ever deepening still. And so it will be, on the one condition that we draw ever nearer, in simplest faith, in worshipping love, to Him.

So doing we shall, as we can never otherwise do, in this restless and perplexing time, all always draw towards one another, and be also instruments of edification, of true cohesion, in the Church and in the world around us. Ours is a period of profound

unrest. It is full of more than normal perils of centrifugal disturbance. Never in modern times, unless I read history and to-day equally and entirely wrong, never certainly within my pastoral life of now exactly forty years, was there so importunate a need for all the virtues of humility, of self-restraint, of a tolerance wholly other than indifference, of jealous truthfulness, of anxious fairness, of the noble modesty and candour of love. Without these virtues, I frankly own, I see little hope for that Church for which we think we could die, and for which we pray to live, that she will long escape not only disestablishment from her immemorial national place and relation—England's crowning benefit, as I think—but disruption within her own society. And we, if we would, from our varying points of conviction and sympathy, work, and work together, for her life, and peace, and holy power—if the Auckland Brotherhood is to live out its high ideal for the far-reaching blessing of the Church—we must ourselves be ever more

and more "gathering together unto Him." For nearness to Him is the place of mental and spiritual peace; of holy humbleness and holy courage; of deeper insights into other hearts; of larger and longer views of the proportions of truth and of duty; of the patience which is power, of the loving faith which is victory; of foretastes, as from a Pisgah, of the eternal country, such as to enable us, in the life of hope, to meet aright the duties of the way. In our inmost souls, in our secret chambers, in our holy worship, in our preaching, our teaching, our converse, our spirit, we will each resolvedly get nearer to Him who is our all. So inevitably we shall draw and converge together with a coalescence which, true and beautiful in itself, is sure, through the lives and ministries of this company of pastors, to tell far and wide for the benefit of the Church of God and the glory of His Name.

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